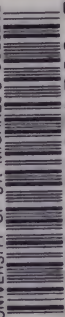


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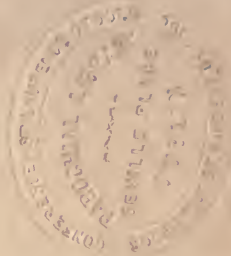
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LECTURES
ON THE
LIFE, &c. OF EDMUND BURKE.



LECTURES
ON THE LIFE, WRITINGS,
AND TIMES,
OF
EDMUND BURKE.

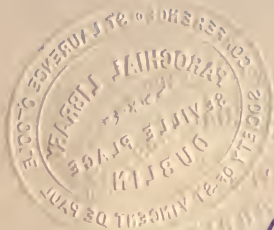
By J. B. ROBERTSON, ESQ.,

PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY AND ENGLISH LITERATURE, AT THE
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN.

TRANSLATOR OF SCHLEGEL'S "PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY," MOEHLER'S
"SYMBOLISM," AND AUTHOR OF THE POEM, "THE
PROPHET ENOCH," ETC.



LONDON:
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NOV 10 1959



TO HIS EMINENCE
CARDINAL CULLEN,
LORD ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN,
ETC. ETC.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EMINENCE,

THE following lectures, which, with your gracious permission, are dedicated to Your Eminence, were, with one exception,* delivered at the Historical Society connected with the Catholic University of Ireland. To none, surely, could they be more appropriately inscribed, than to a Prince of the Church who had so large a part in the foundation of that University, who has ever watched over it with such paternal care, patronized the productions of its Professors, and among others, encouraged my own humble labours.

But the illustrious subject of this biographical work will excite in Your Eminence an interest, that the intrinsic merits of the book itself could never call forth. His moral character, his genius, the eminent services he rendered to Ireland, to the British empire,

* By an accident, the lecture on the Abuses in the Indian Administration was not delivered.

and to Europe, and which have often elicited your public admiration, are set forth to the best of my ability in the present work. To each of these subjects I may here briefly refer.

When I informed the late Catholic Primate, for whom Your Eminence had so much regard, and whose memory, all who had the honour of his friendship must ever revere, that I was about to undertake the present work, His Grace replied :—" I am glad to hear it. What a fine character was Burke !" The faintly Prelate seemed to have been as much struck with the moral beauty of his character, as with the splendour of his genius. Among the British statesmen and *literati* of the eighteenth century, there is certainly not a purer or a nobler character. He may well be called, slightly changing the words of Tertullian, "*anima naturaliter Catholica* ;" he came, at times, like his friend Johnson, very near to the threshold of the sanctuary of the truth, and, under more favourable circumstances, would in all probability have received the grace to enter within it.

As to his genius, I shall here say no more than that I fully concur in the opinion of his recent able biographer, Mr. Macknight, that, with the single exception of Shakspeare, there is not a writer in our language in whom we find such treasures of thought and such a variety of intellectual gifts.

Then as to his services to Ireland ;—he laid the foundation of her religious freedom, promoted her

material prosperity, and in the imperial sphere in which he moved, was enabled to advance her interests more effectually than if he had remained at home.

With regard to his labours in behalf of the empire, and of its various dependencies, his warnings respecting the American colonies, his economical reforms, his efforts to ameliorate the condition of the West India Negroes, his endeavours to consolidate the religious liberties of the Protestant Dissenters, the reforms he suggested in the criminal code, his protracted struggles to rescue India from oppression, and, lastly, his strenuous resistance to organic changes in the British constitution—changes which he well foresaw would lead to the alternations of popular anarchy and of military tyranny ;—these are all acts which, taken singly, would have sufficed to entitle any statesman to the lasting gratitude of his country.

Then, what shall I say of his services to Europe? The subject is fully discussed in the following pages ; but here I may reply to that question in the eloquent words of a very distinguished German writer and publicist, who, in lectures delivered in the year 1806, when the memory of Burke was still fresh, thus writes :—

“The most important epoch,” says Adam Müller, in the history of German politics, “is the introduction among us of Edmund Burke; the greatest, most profound, most powerful, most humane, and heroic statesman of all times and nations. His works are

translated ; what is more, are understood by us.* We endeavour to live, and reason, and write in their spirit. He is truly honoured among strangers only, while his country but half understands him, and feels only half his glory ; considering him chiefly as a brilliant orator, as a partizan, and as a patriot. He is acknowledged in Germany as the real and successful mediator between liberty and law, between the unity and the division of power, and between the republican and the aristocratic principles." † Adam Müller's illustrious friend, the critic and the philosopher, Frederick von Schlegel, passed an equally high encomium on our eminent statesman, and, among other things, spoke "of the great British writer who had founded for Europe a new school of political conservatives." ‡ The same language is held by all the eminent publicists and philosophers, Catholic and Protestant, who for the last seventy years have adorned France and Germany—Gentz, Stolberg, Haller, Görres, Jarcke, Phillips, in the one country ; and, in the other, De Maistre, De Bonald, Chateaubriand, the Abbé de la Mennais, before his fall, and others.

The Sovereigns of Europe, too, as well as their most

* Adam Müller here alludes to the admirable German translation of Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," accompanied with valuable notes, by F. von Gentz, the celebrated publicist.

† "Lectures on German Literature," Dresden, 1806. The author was a convert to the Catholic faith: He died in 1829.

‡ See the "Concordia," a periodical. Vienna, 1820.

distinguished statesmen, were loud in the expression of their grateful acknowledgments to Burke for his signal services to the cause of European society. The illustrious Pontiff, Pius VI. also addressed to him an autograph letter, thanking him for his generous advocacy of the religious and political rights of English and Irish Catholics ; for his humane exertions in behalf of the emigrant Clergy of France ; and at the same time expressing his admiration of the able work he had written against the sophists of that country. This was an honour rarely accorded, indeed, to a Protestant writer by a sovereign Pontiff.

Such is the statesman whose life, writings, and times I have attempted to depict. But after the excellent biographies of him which have already appeared, some explanation seems due to the public for the Essay which I have ventured to submit to its judgment. Prior has given a lively sketch of his life, character, and genius, replete with interesting details and judicious observations. The elaborate researches of Mr. Macknight in his more comprehensive work have thrown a flood of light on the minutest incidents in his hero's life, and on the public transactions and personages of his times. His various works, too, are analyzed with clearness and fullness in this valuable book.

For the events in Burke's life recorded in the following pages, the two above-named works are my chief authorities.

As to his literary merits, the excellent criticisms in both these biographies, in Lord Brougham's "British Statesmen," and, especially, in some essays of the *Quarterly Review*—these criticisms, I say, though they have not exhausted the subject, leave not much to be desired.

But while in the following lectures I have traced the chief events in the life of Burke, analyzed his principal works, submitted them to a critical appreciation, and characterized the great transactions in which he was engaged, and the men with whom he was connected, or to whom he was opposed, my chief object has been to vindicate and to develop his political principles. This was a field where, even after the excellent reapers who had gone before me, there was, I thought, not a little to be gleaned.

But the vindication of Burke's political principles included, of course, an analysis of them; yet this was no easy task in the case of a writer whose largest works are so discursive in their views, and whose philosophy is scattered through a variety of tracts, speeches, essays, and letters, extending over a period of thirty years and more. This fact was well perceived and expressed by one of our most thoughtful political writers, who, after having in youth combated Burke, learned on reflection to justify his principles, and to do homage to his wisdom. "It is an operation of some difficulty," says Sir James Mackintosh, "to collect fragments of philosophy from the various

corners, where the end of temporary persuasion and the form of popular discourse have required that they should be scattered; to arrange and distribute them in the order which is best adapted to enlighten the understanding of all times; to separate general principles from the passing events to which they are applied, and to disengage profound truths from the gorgeous robes of eloquence, which are too dazzling to be penetrated by very feeble intellects; to distinguish between the philosopher—the teacher of political wisdom to all posterity—and the unrivalled orator, who employed his genius in guarding his contemporaries against the evils of the times.”* This is a just account of the method, as well as of the political philosophy of Burke. As that philosophy was the immediate result of experience, and not deduced from a metaphysical system founded on intuition, confirmed by observation, it naturally partook of an unsystematic character. It is practical wisdom before it has assumed the shape of abstract speculation; and this, though the earliest, is not on that account the least valuable phase of philosophic thought. Political philosophy in this form, if it has less influence on the school, exerts on the other hand a greater sway over the minds of statesmen and of men of the world.

But as I said above, I have fought not only to *analyze* and to *vindicate*, but have endeavoured,

* Letter to Mr. Windham, Bombay, 1806. Life of Mackintosh, vol. i., p. 313.

according to the best of my ability, to *develop* the political views of Burke. Those institutions and fundamental laws which he defended on the ground of utility and expedience, I have sought to show to be absolutely necessary, and to be founded in the very constitution of human society. In the treatment of this subject, a Catholic derives many advantages from his religion, which sheds so bright a light on the great social and political questions. But the principles, views, instincts, and aspirations of Burke in politics, were generally as catholic as those of Leibnitz in theology. It is rarely they need correction. Though as an Anglican, he naturally held, for example, the doctrine of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown, yet in his later writings, at least, he does not bring it prominently forward, and never attempts to apply it to Catholic countries. On the contrary, he indignantly reprobates the Semi-Erastianism of the emperor, Joseph II., in Austria, and of his brother the Grand-Duke Leopold of Tuscany; and in the event of a restoration of the Bourbons in France, he suggests the convocation, not of a mixed assembly, but of an ecclesiastical Synod, to reform abuses in the Gallican Church. In fact, he is still, after the lapse of eighty years, the most catholic-minded of modern British statesmen; and hence, too, the influence he has exerted over Catholic Europe, and the misapprehension or at least inadequate appreciation of many of his political views, that so long prevailed even among the more constitutional poli-

ticians of Protestant England. He steered a middle course between a narrow-minded, Pharisaic Toryism on the one hand, and a licentious, Sadducean Whiggery on the other ; and hence was often misconceived and assailed by both. Though not bred in the Catholic faith, he had strong sympathies with it ; and as has been said of Dante, that in the lofty music of his divine song the Christian nations of the Middle Age recognized the expression of their inmost feelings, so I may say that that strong attachment to monarchy, to nobility, to legal freedom, to all legitimate rights—the keen sense of wrong—the never-flagging hope—the salient energy of spirit, that amid defeat, disaster, disappointment, and the religious oppression of three centuries, still glowed in the bosoms of the faithful people of Ireland, found a vent in the eloquent strains of Burke.

The vindication and the development of this great man's policy can surely not be considered inopportune. The political Anti-Christ, which he combated in the first outburst of its fury, still assails society. It has often shifted its ground, and changed its tactics ; but it still pursues its work of destruction.

The great spiritual enemy of mankind, after having in the course of eighteen centuries fought, but in vain, to overturn every dogma of the Church, has during the last hundred years and more, directed his assaults more especially against the doctrines of natural religion, as well as against the institutions of civil and

domestic society. He is bent on the destruction of man's temporal, as well as eternal happiness ; and he well knows how much the Church is weakened and distracted by perturbations in civil society.

Hence the Sovereign Pontiffs, the guardians of Christian civilization, as well as the Supreme Rulers of the Church, have, from Pope Clement XII., in the early part of the last century, down to the present great Pontiff, Pius IX., never ceased to warn the faithful committed to their charge—Sovereigns as well as subjects—of the awful perils, which menaced social order as well as religion. They have anathematized all those secret societies—the clandestine laboratories where, with various degrees of malignity, were fabricated the engines of destruction against all moral, political, and domestic order. Those societies gave not, indeed, the impulse to the anti-Christian and the anti-social doctrines which were afloat in society ; but they concentrated and intensified their malignant force. And when from its secret recesses the Revolution burst forth in all the terrors of its might, the Popes and the Bishops fearlessly pointed out its anti-social, as well as its anti-religious errors, and up to this hour have combated both with the boldest energy.

From the very nature of the present work, the controversy is chiefly with the anti-social, rather than with the anti-religious principles of the Revolution. In the execution of this task, I have carefully stated those social and political doctrines which, as resting on

the authority of Scripture, Tradition, and solemn judgments of the Church, confirmed, too, as they are by the general testimony of mankind, must command the internal assent of the Catholic Christian ; and that other set of political doctrines which, proclaimed by the consentient wisdom and experience of all ages and countries, commend themselves to the acceptance of the wise. These two classes of social truths mutually aid and support each other, and are the vital conditions of Christian civilization—the foundations of the freedom and of the stability of states.

When we cast our eyes over the nations of Europe, we are saddened, even to the sickness of the heart, to behold the ceaseless, desperate efforts of impiety, and even of the most revolting materialism, to regain that dominion which it lost eighty years ago. But on the other hand, we are cheered by the spectacle of an energetic religious re-action in Catholic, and even in some Protestant countries—a spectacle which the eighteenth century did not present, and which is nowhere more consoling than in my own England. But while a large part of the people oppose a vigorous resistance to the progress of irreligion, we see, with very few exceptions, the Governments of Europe becoming every day weaker, more distracted, more disorganized, more and more alienated from the spirit of Christianity. Is it that those disordered Governments are gradually preparing the way for that huge, monstrous, impious tyranny of the man of sin, “ who

will set up his throne against the Most High," and persecute the followers of Christ from one extremity of the earth to the other? Or, is it that these Governments will decompose, and by degrees give way to more perfect systems of polity, adapted to the wants of the nations renovated by Catholicism? This is a mystery which the future only can unveil.

Now, if we turn our eyes to the British empire, who is not struck with the remark of a pious and learned divine of the Church of England, that a dreadful Revolution, like that of 1789, seems impending over us? It becomes not the Christian and the patriot to discourage and sadden the hearts of his countrymen. No : the timely and energetic co-operation of loyal and religious men of different communions may yet to a great extent, as I show later, check the progress of irreligion and crime in Great Britain, prevent the defecration of the school and of the laws, set barriers against the inundations of the impious press, and so prevent the subversion of the throne, the peerage, and finally, of every liberty which man holds dear. Yet it cannot be denied, that clouds nearly as dense and dark as those which gathered round the France of 1789, are now hanging over my unfortunate country. The irreligious press pours forth its productions in every shape, and adapted to every class of readers, whether learned, half instructed, or ignorant. The worn-out garment of Rationalism, which the more learned as well as the more respect-

able divines of Protestant Germany had cast off, has been taken up by a portion of the Anglican clergy. And if Rationalism should spread in the Church of England, it will overthrow the very Constitution with which that Church is connected.

Deism, more or less disguised, is active and powerful in the press. A new school of Materialists, supported by considerable talents, is gaining in numbers and in influence. In the lower strata of society, we too often find a frightful mass of vice, and religious ignorance and indifference ; and, in a large portion of the population of the great cities, the most fanatical impiety. With all these forms of unbelief, whether in the higher, the middle, or the lower ranks of life, we see conjoined political doctrines more or less subversive of all social order and freedom.

Beside this corruption and irreligion, there is, indeed, much moral worth and piety to be found ; a great abatement of the old anti-Catholic prejudices ; remarkable approximations in many of the Anglican clergy and of the educated laity to the Catholic faith ; a yearning in very many after something more stable and consistent in doctrine, more spiritual in devotion, and more solemn and impressive in public worship, than Anglicanism can furnish ; lastly, conversions from every class to the Catholic Church, and often accompanied by a spirit of self-denial and heroic sacrifice, not to be paralleled since the days of the primitive Church. So, if there is very much in

the moral aspect of England to distress and sadden us, there is much also to cheer and console. We must, however, bear in mind, that here the Catholic Church, though daily receiving fresh infusions of life, is as yet much too feeble to accomplish a moral renovation of society. But it may be said that the apprehensions of a revolution are to a great degree unfounded, for the British constitution has many more elements of strength and solidity, than the degenerate French monarchy of 1789; that our aristocracy and gentry are far more conversant with political affairs, than the French noblesse of the last century; that our middle classes are more habituated to self-government; and that, therefore, these two orders of English society are less likely to be misled by the shallow sophisms of Revolutionists, than the corresponding classes in France eighty years ago.

Doubtless, there is much truth in these observations; and the social blessings long enjoyed by our country may inspire us with hope, indeed, but not with a presumptuous confidence. In reply to these objections it may be observed, that a nation's chief strength lies not in its political, but in its religious institutions, and in a corresponding fidelity to them. A good religion will reform the abuses, and supply the short-comings of defective political institutions, and, in course of time, gradually mould and assimilate them to itself.

Secondly, though within the last thirty years there have been, in different parts of the empire, many wise

and falutary adminiftrative reforms, yet the Conftitution has been confiderably weakened. The conftitutional changes of 1832, inftead of allaying, have increafed the fever of innovation. The Englifhman, once too flow to adopt the wifeft and moft urgent meafures of improvement, has now loft much of his attachment to ancient institutions. *Sat verbum fapienti.*

Laftly, England not having the fame moral resources as France, would not, in cafe of a great revolution, poffefs the like recuperative energies. It would not poffefs the cohesive power which, in France, held all believers in Chrift “in the unity of the fpirit and in the bond of peace;” nor the renovating efficacy of the Catholic Sacraments; nor a Clergy which, in its immense majority, prefented fuch examples of piety and of heroic fortitude; nor fuch a vaft multitude of devoted Chriftians in every order of the laity, that France, at the outbreak of her great Revolution, could ftill fhew. The wonderful expansion of her Church within the prefent century is a phenomenon that ftrikes every obferver; and had France poffeffed, fince the year 1800, the fame moderate meafure of educational freedom which fhe obtained in 1848, her religious regeneration at this day would have been far more profound. Her political institutions, indeed, weakened and difjointed for a hundred and fifty years before the great Revolution, have, after that fearful convulfion, been forced to pafs

through a much slower and more tedious process of recovery.

If we now turn from the Constitutional to the Foreign and the Irish policy, which for thirty years Great Britain has pursued, have we any motives for self-gratulation? And could that great statesman who forms the subject of the following lectures, now rise from his grave, what would be his sentiments on these matters! What bitter tears would not he, and his great contemporaries, Pitt, and Grenville, and Windham, shed on the fallen condition of their once mighty country! Could they now recognize that England, once the noble defender of law and freedom, the main bulwark of Europe against anarchy and a lawless, impious tyranny? Could they recognize the same England, now calling herself at one moment an Asiatic empire, as if she could sever herself from Europe, which she is bound to by so many ties, moral and political;—at another moment, more guilty still, cheering and hallooing on the hell-dogs of Revolution, as they spread havoc and desolation over the fairest regions of the world, and tear up the vineyards of the Vicar of Christ!

What would those statesmen have said to the culpable apathy—the systematic neglect in regard to your noble country, which acquiescence in the just demands of her people, and a kindly sympathetic treatment, might have easily converted into one of the strongholds of the British empire! Since the

times of those statesmen, indeed, who did so much for promoting the infant liberties of Ireland, she has acquired a much larger measure of political rights, and of ecclesiastical freedom. But her social grievances are many and various. To say nothing of older and more complicated evils, the relief of the poor is administered in a manner most harsh and unchristian ; the tenant feels himself insecure and unhappy in his home ; and the old persecuting spirit,* which once proscribed the Catholic school, still throws every obstacle in the way of the higher education of our youth. For, surely, to exact conditions repugnant to the very principles and discipline of the Church, is to mar any boon, educational or otherwise, offered to Catholics. Those most eloquent in denouncing the intolerance of former times, renew religious persecution in another form, and under the odious semblance of liberality.

These evils, and the dangers with which they threaten society, many Catholic prelates and many statesmen and writers, Catholic and Protestant, have denounced ; but none, I think, with so much vigour and perseverance, as Your Eminence. How often in your episcopal charges, and still more in those valuable state-papers which you have from time to time read at

* The last dodge of this spirit is to attempt to introduce into the Catholic Church the Presbyterian polity ; to associate in a common board lay elders with Bishops, not only for promoting the interests of literature and science (this would be right), but for pronouncing judgment on matters of faith and morals. And this is called the protection of the laity from episcopal control !!

public meetings in this capital, has not Your Eminence pointed out the heavy judgments, which the unworthy treatment of the poor sooner or later brings upon a government and a country! How often have you shown, that the insecurity of land-tenure jeopardizes all the social relations, is as adverse to the interests of the proprietary as of the tenants, depresses agriculture, paralyzes trade, depopulates a country, and strips the empire of many of its most valiant defenders! How often have you shown to our rulers, and by melancholy examples, the insane, the suicidal policy, that with one hand expends immense sums to put down rebellion, and with the other, by godless education, swells the mass of popular discontent, and even directly encourages and fosters political disaffection!

How often has Your Eminence warned misguided statesmen, that the flames of revolution, which they fanned in other states, would sooner or later consume themselves, and the edifice in which they stood in fancied security! Alas! as Bossuet says, in those days of infatuation, the warnings of the wise passed away unheeded! But the hour of retribution has come sooner than was expected. The revolution now knocks at our door! The dogs of Actæon have turned against their master. The demons, let loose by a crafty magician on foreign nations, have suddenly resisted his spell, passed into his own body, and are now wounding and tearing him, and striving to cast him to

the earth. And it will be only to the potent exorcisms of that Church, which he still treats with such signal ingratitude, he will be indebted for his final deliverance. But such has ever been the history of the Church. Curfes and oppreffion ſhe repays by bleffings and ſervices; and even thoſe who ſtrive to fetter her arms, ſhe ſhields from their and her foes. Thoſe who aſſail her injure but themſelves; for ſhe wears a divine panoply, impervious to the darts of her enemies.

Thus have I endeavoured briefly to point out to Your Eminence the ſcope and the objects of theſe lectures, and from the preſent moral and political aſpect of Europe, and of Great Britain in particular, fought to prove their reaſonableneſs.

The occaſion, too, on which this work appears, is, I truſt, no inauſpicious one.

An auguſt Prince, the heir of high deſtinies, and whoſe recent viſit to this capital, will, I truſt, be the prelude to Ireland of a new era of peace and proſperity, has juſt inaugurated the ſtatue of the great ſtateſman who forms the ſubject of the following lectures.

Honour to the Univerſity which has raiſed a noble monument to the glory of her moſt illuſtrious ſon! Honour to the Iriſh artiſt, whoſe admirable ſkill has called up before us the majeſtic figure of his great compatriot! At his bidding, he riſes once more to denounce oppreſſion—indignation ſaſhes from his

brow—he holds in his hand the scroll of India's wrongs ; while from his lips flow the burning accents that, rolling over fifteen thousand miles of ocean, announce deliverance to the dusky millions of Asia !

May I venture to express a hope, that the public-spirited Corporation of this noble city, which on more than one occasion has evinced a lively interest in the advancement of learning, will emulate the noble example set by the Protestant University, and purchase the house where their immortal fellow-citizen first saw the light, and convert it (and either purpose would be highly appropriate) into a museum of science or art, or into an asylum of charity ? Nations that honour their illustrious dead, will ever bring forth men worthy to succeed them !

Meantime, an Englishman, connected with Ireland by social position and by family ties, ventures to plant a humble flower on the grave of Burke.

Commending myself to Your Eminence's prayers,
I remain,

My dear Lord Cardinal,
With sentiments of the deepest respect,
Your Eminence's most obedient
and devoted servant,

THE AUTHOR.

DUBLIN, 30th May, 1868.

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STATE of Ireland in the early part of the eighteenth century. Family and birth of Edmund Burke. Religion of his parents. His love for his Catholic relatives. His school-days at Bal-litore, in county Kildare. His matriculation at Trinity College, Dublin. Defultory nature of his studies. Correspondence with his former school-fellow, Richard Shackleton. His departure from Dublin, and his entry at the Middle Temple, London. Impressions made by his first visit to that capital. His growing repugnance to the study of the law. Doubtful whether he would have obtained success at the Bar. Great statesmen rarely make eminent lawyers, and *vice versa*. Burke's remarks on the study of English jurisprudence. Gives up the law, and devotes himself exclusively to literature. Consequent alienation of his father. His first work, "Vindication of Natural Society." Its literary excellencies. His next production, "A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful." Merits and defects of that book. Reasons why his later works are more imaginative than his earlier ones. Repairs to Bath on account of his health. Marriage with Miss Nugent. Character of that lady. "The Abridgment of the History of England." "The Annual Register." This periodical a useful preparation for Burke's Parliamentary labours. His introduction to Mr. Gerard Hamilton, Chief Secretary for Ireland. Becomes his private secretary, and repairs with him to Dublin. Reconciliation with his father. State of Ireland at this period (1761). History of Penal Laws begun by Burke. Draws up a petition to the King, in behalf of Irish Catholics. Remarkable fate of that petition. Hamilton procures a pension for him. Arrogance of the former leads to a rupture with Burke. He resigns his pension; but soon after inherits a property of his elder brother. Introduced to the Marquis of Rockingham as the latter is made Prime Minister. Becomes his private secretary, and, through Lord Verney, is

returned to Parliament for the borough of Wendover. State of political parties in England at his entry into Parliament. No substantial difference in the political principles of the Whigs and of the Hanoverian Tories during the greater part of the eighteenth century. Accession of King George III. to the throne. Lord Bute's Administration. The Party called the "King's Friends." Good and bad elements in that Party. The Rockingham Ministry. Sketches of the Premier, and of his colleagues, Mr. Dowdeswell, the Duke of Grafton, General Conway, Lord John Cavendish, and Sir John Savile. Sound political principles of that Party. Sketch of the leading statesmen of the other sections of the Whigs, and of the Tories: Mr. George Grenville, the elder Pitt, Lord North, and Lord Shelburne. Vindication of Burke's prospective policy on all the great measures he was henceforth to advocate, whether on colonial, Irish, economical, constitutional, or foreign affairs. Wisdom the most salient quality of his genius. His first speech in Parliament, in the year 1766. Its brilliant success. His second speech on the Repeal of the Stamp Act praised on all sides. Judgments of the elder Pitt and of Dr. Johnson upon the young orator. His great debating powers. Conciliatory policy towards America pursued by the Rockingham Administration. Various measures of Reform introduced by it. Marquis of Rockingham solicits in vain a junction, first with the elder Pitt, then with the Duke of Bedford. Inconsistent conduct of Pitt, in regard to America. The Rockingham Ministry broken up, and Pitt charged to form a new one. He is created Earl of Chatham. Declines the recommendation of the Duke of Grafton to give office to Burke. The latter visits his family in Ireland, and is very well received by the gentry of Galway, and receives from the Corporation the freedom of its city. Defends in Parliament, on his return to England, the interests of the Irish trade, and for his services, receives the freedom of his native city. Administration dissolved by the illness of Earl Chatham, and by the death of Charles Townshend. Lord North made Prime Minister in 1770. Burke, in 1772, opposes Fox's motion for relieving Protestant clergymen from subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. Remarkable sentiments delivered by him on this occasion. In the same year he supports a motion to relieve Unitarian ministers from subscription to certain doctrinal statements exacted by the Act of Toleration. Consistency of his conduct. Same year he opposes a motion of Fox, relative to the marriage of minors without the consent of parents. Again opposes his friend, Fox, on a motion for Parliamentary Reform. His visit to France in 1773. His inquiries into the moral and social condition of the various classes in that country. His personal acquaintance with the bishop and leading clergy of Auxerre.

His suppers at the house of *Mdme. du Deffant*, and his religious discussions with the French "*philosophes*" whom he there meets. His presentation at the Court of Versailles. Reflections on that memorable incident in his life. On his return to England, he denounces in Parliament and in the "*Annual Register*," the social dangers threatening France and Europe from the Partition of Poland, and from the irreligious Propagandism.

LECTURE II.

DISTURBANCES at Boston in consequence of the Tea Duty levied by Great Britain. The Boston Port Bill. Burke's Speech on Mr. Fuller's Motion. He justifies the Repeal of the Stamp Act by the Rockingham Administration. Extraordinary sensation produced by that speech in and out of Parliament. Retaliatory acts of the British Government and of the American colonists. Alarming state of America. Lord North proposes a half-measure of conciliation. The Rockingham Party, through Burke, unfolds in turn its plan of pacification. Summary of his magnificent speech on this occasion. He concludes it with thirteen pacific resolutions, and resumes his seat amid general applause. His bill for economical reforms in the Civil List. Summary of his scheme. Its equity and wisdom. Great and various merits of the speech. Striking eulogies pronounced on it by Gibbon, by Lord North, by Dunning, and more recently by Mr. Massie, the historian. The chief clause in the bill rejected by a majority of about fifty voices. In the following session, resolutions proposed and carried by Dunning in support of several clauses of the bill. Success of this measure retarded by stratagems of Lord North, as well as by dangerous projects put forth by some members of Burke's own party. Burke's great popularity at this time. Prior to the coalition, no orator more commanded the attention of the House of Commons. His defects in delivery exaggerated. First relaxation of the penal laws in 1778. English Catholics relieved of the most oppressive restrictions. A like measure passed by the Irish Parliament in favour of Irish Catholics. Difficulties raised by the English Ministers as to some clauses of the Irish Bill, remedied by the personal exertions of Burke. "No Popery" riots in Scotland. The Gordon riots in London. Dreadful excesses. Burke's personal courage on the occasion. Supineness of Ministers. Riots suppressed by energy of King George III. Execution of the leading rioters. Burke's humane intervention. Exemplary conduct of the

Irish Catholics on this occasion, as described by him. Bristol election speech. Burke there defends his advocacy of the Catholic claims, and of other measures. Merits of the speech. He loses his election at Bristol, and is then returned for the borough of Malton. His plan for the gradual enfranchisement of the West India Negroes. Sketch of his two great political contemporaries, Charles James Fox and the younger Pitt. Their eloquence compared with Burke's. Defeat of Lord North's Ministry in 1782. Marquis of Rockingham's second administration. Burke made Paymaster of the Forces, but not admitted into the Cabinet. Fox leader of the House of Commons. Reforms in his own office made by Burke. His plan of economical reform now in great part carried out. Other wholesome measures in preparation, and peace about to be concluded with America, when the Rockingham Administration is broken up by the death of its chief. Affliction of Burke at the death of his great friend and patron. Lord Shelburne appointed Premier by the King. Dissatisfaction of Fox with that appointment, and his consequent resignation of office. Burke induced to follow his example. Evil results of that step. The younger Pitt made Chancellor of the Exchequer. Peace concluded with America in 1782. The parties of Fox and of Lord North combine, and overthrow Lord Shelburne's Administration. The Coalition Ministry formed in 1783. Burke again made Paymaster of the Forces. He opposes Pitt's motion for Parliamentary Reform. Supports Fox's India Bill, which is rejected in the House of Lords. The younger Pitt made Prime Minister. His wonderful tact, prudence, and courage in his arduous position. Dissolution of Parliament, and signal defeat of Fox's party at the elections. Treatment of Burke in the new Parliament. The affairs of India. The Regency question. Prominent part taken by Burke in the discussion of that question. His then frequent intemperance in debate. Burke's views on Parliamentary Reform, whether as regards the lowering of the elective franchise, or the duration of Parliaments. His remarkable speech on that subject in 1780. His letter in the same year to the Chairman of the Buckingham Committee on the same subject. Great difference between administrative and constitutional reforms. Analogies between reforms in the State, and reforms in the Family, and in the Church. Vindication of Burke's views on the English Radicalism and the French Revolution. Dissertation on the Philosophy of Legislation. Civil society and civil power of divine origin. Proofs thereof from Scripture, tradition, reason, and the general consent of mankind. The doctrine of the sovereignty of the people false and absurd. No substantial difference in the views set forth by the Catholic schools as to the immediate or mediate derivation of the civil power from God. That

power, though divine in its origin, not in all cases indefeasible. Unlike the Family and the Church, it has received from heaven no definite form. Reasons for that fact. Monarchy, the earliest as well as the most widely diffused form of Government. The rise of the Republic later in the history of nations. Reasons of state, and not natural justice, the measure of political privileges. Immense blessings which Catholic Christianity has conferred on civil society. Mode, and conditions, and limits, under which those social blessings were bestowed. Reasons, deduced from the very essence of the state, why sudden organic changes must be destructive to it. Salutary changes only partial modifications or developments of a pre-existing state of things. Example of the ancient law-givers in illustration of this truth. The state an entity, neither purely physical, nor purely moral. The laws which determine its rise, growth, duration, and decay, and the various agents to whose combined action it is subjected. Two remarkable passages from Burke and from Frederick Schlegel, on this matter, compared.

LECTURE III.

COMPONENT parts of the monarchical state: Royalty, Aristocracy, Civil Establishment of the Church, Parliamentary Representation of the clergy, nobles, and commons, and Municipal Corporations. In the well-regulated Republic most of these Institutions prevail :—1. Early origin and wide diffusion of Royalty ; its nature, object, and special characteristics. 2. Aristocracy to be found under all forms of government ; its nature, object, and special characteristics. 3. Civil Establishment of the Church. Religious and political authority blended in the Patriarchal Dispensation, but separated in the Jewish, are in the Christian economy rendered still more distinct. Advantages to the Church and to civil society from their mutual independence. Yet Church and State, though moving in different spheres, are not to be severed. Connection between Church and State, useful to the former, but necessary to the latter. Proofs and illustrations of this position. 4. Parliamentary Representation of the Clergy, Nobles, and Commons. In this representation alone the political significance and the social services of these three orders are duly and vigorously represented and brought out. As Royalty represents in the State the principle of cohesion, so the clergy, and the learned corporations united with it, symbolize the principle of spiritual life and of intellectual power ; and the nobility that

of material force, and political stability. Special political functions of these two orders in regard to each other, and to the Commonalty, and to Royalty, with which they coexist from the first. The Commonalty, or the Third Estate, rises to power later than the other two ; but when qualified by commercial wealth and intellectual culture, it takes part with them in the work of legislation. It represents the principle of political progress. In the State, as in Nature itself, the two great principles of repose and of movement alike necessary. In the Christian temperate Monarchy these two principles admirably combined. Glance at the history of the Commonalty in ancient and in modern times. The special functions of the Commonalty, and its political relations to Royalty, to Nobility, and to the Clergy.

5. The Municipal Corporation ; its nature and functions. It is for the material needs of the city and of the town-land, what the provincial and the national legislatures are for the high political wants of the province and of the kingdom. Admirable training which municipal institutions give to a people.

6. Parliamentary relations of Royalty. In the Mediæval Monarchy, the Royal power, though limited, was yet effective. Its conscience could rarely be coerced. Undue restrictions on Royalty will sooner or later lead to dangerous collisions. Recent case of Charles X., king of France. The Mediæval Monarchy never reached its maturity. The political harmony of the Christian State destroyed by the Reformation of the sixteenth century. What an admirable perfection, but for that Revolution, the Christian Monarchy would have attained to ! The Reformation produced not the same political effects in England as in other countries. Reasons for that fact. The forms of the old Christian State preserved, even when undermined by the despotism of the Tudors, and the arbitrary innovations of the Stuarts. Fatal policy of James II., disapproved of by his Catholic friends at home and abroad, as well as by his most loyal Protestant subjects. Character of the Revolution of 1688. The Constitution it established a modification of the mediæval Monarchy. Summary of those social and political principles which are binding on the conscience of Catholics, as well as of those which, resting solely on human testimony and experience, commend themselves only to their reason. Object of this Dissertation to find a scientific basis for the practical wisdom of Burke. While Burke was warning his country against democratic innovations on its Constitution, the French Revolution broke out. Three main causes for that fearful concussion : the absolutism of Richelieu and of Louis XIV., the moral corruption of the Regency, and the impious and profligate literature of the reign of Louis XV. The clergy distracted by the Jansenists, oppressed by the

Parliaments, and little encouraged by the Court, unable to concentrate their energies against unbelief. Learning and piety still adorned the Church. Glance at the state of the different classes of French society when the Revolution broke out. Analysis of Burke's "Reflections" on that great event. Condemnation by him of the seditious societies set up by Dr. Priestley and Dr. Price for propagating the French revolutionary principles. That Revolution proved to be in its nature, object, and tendencies totally different from the Revolution of 1688. The British Constitution the gradual growth of ages. The old French Constitution, though not perfected, admirable, and needed only repair. Culpable folly of the Revolutionists in destroying it. Incompetency of the members composing the Constituent Assembly from their condition and professions. Two capital errors in the convocation and in the assembling of the States-General: first the doubling the usual number of the Tiers-état, and secondly, the absorption into it of the other two orders. Importance of nobility to a State. The new municipal institutions of France destined to prepare the way for a more oppressive Bureaucracy. Society not an artificial combination, as the eighteenth century supposed, but the natural condition of man. Various sophistical theories of Dr. Price refuted. The hapless condition of Royalty under the new French Constitution. The misfortunes of France traceable to the decline of the Christian Religion, and of the spirit of chivalry. Advantages of the union of Church and State, both in a religious and in a political point of view. Injustice and cruelty in the confiscation of the property of the Church of France. Its authors pointed out. The plan of Burke, not so much to trace the causes of the Revolution, as to depict and to counteract its results. The "Civil Constitution of the Clergy." The strictures of Burke, most remarkable for a Protestant, on this measure, so subversive of all Catholic discipline. His account of the moral conduct of the bishops and of the inferior clergy of France. Many of the abbés mere laymen. His account of the nobility: their good and their bad qualities. Some of their faults ascribable to the suspension of the States-General, and to the loss of many of the local legislatures. Political privileges of the nobles and of the clergy. Both orders subjected to the indirect taxes. Of the direct imposts, the nobles exempt from none, except the "Taille." In the conquered provinces, the clergy subject to the same taxes as the nobles, and in the old hereditary provinces they had redeemed themselves, in some cases, by certain large annual payments, and in others by free gifts. Their annual income in 1789 five millions sterling. The French monarchy in general. Life and property admirably protected; the administration of justice pure; the *lettres de cachet* a real abuse, but

much exaggerated, and affecting chiefly the higher classes. The great agricultural, commercial, and industrial prosperity of France, the splendour of her literature and art, the high cultivation of philosophy and science, her refinement of manners, the excellence of her laws, her military and naval glory, and her political influence in Europe—proofs of a very high civilization, incompatible with tyranny. Burke lastly examines the mode of election for members of the legislature, the new executive, the municipal institutions, the new system of judicature, the composition and discipline of the army, and the system of finance; and finally foretells the results of the new order of things. Judgment of Windham on this celebrated work, as he received a copy four days after its publication.

LECTURE IV.

THE “Reflections on the French Revolution” followed by “A Letter to a Royalist Member of the Constituent Assembly.” Fine sketch of Rousseau’s character, as well as of the influence of his writings on the morals and the manners of the youth of both sexes. Excellent observations on the old French Monarchy of the Three Estates. The laws and the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly a necessary prelude to the horrors of the Convention. Prodigious sensation produced by the “Reflections” both in England and on the Continent. Admiration of King George III., and of his Prime Minister, Pitt, for the work. The same sentiments shared by Wilberforce, Windham, and the leading members of the Rockingham Party, as well as by the Universities of Oxford and of Dublin. Foreign Sovereigns, including Pope Pius VI., address letters of thanks and of commendation to the author. French translation of the “Reflections” passed through several editions. Thirty thousand copies of the work sold in England within a few months. Vehement opposition to it from many of the Dissenters, especially the Unitarians. An extreme but small section of the Whigs sympathize in Parliament with the French Revolution. Extraordinary merit of Burke’s “Reflections.” Singular fulfilment of all his predictions relative to France. Three-fourths of the British public within a year gained over to his views. Fox’s repeated eulogies in Parliament on the French Constituent Assembly. His monstrous panegyric on one occasion. Burke, attempting to reply, is interrupted by the Foxites. On 6th May, 1791, his open rupture in the House of Commons with Fox. The memorable scene

described. Burke's Essay, "An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs." In the first part, he speaks of his political differences with Fox, long before the French Revolution. In the second part, he proves the perfect agreement of his principles with those of the Whigs of 1688. Those principles much more conservative, as well as liberal, than the doctrines held by many Tories of the seventeenth century. They were nearly akin to the Catholic doctrine on the limits of political obedience. Admirable adjustment of the rights and duties of sovereigns and of subjects in the middle age. Dangers of the Anglican doctrine of passive obedience, as well as of the Calvinistic principle of the sovereignty of the people. Letters of thanks from the emigrant French princes and nobles to Burke for his eminent services to their cause. Calonne's visit to Burke. The Chevalier de la Bintinnaye appointed French Royalist agent in England. Mission of Burke's son, Richard, to the emigrant court at Coblenz. His kind reception by the French exiles, and their sense of gratitude to his illustrious father. He finds infidelity in discredit among them, and a sober and rational tone of politics generally prevailing. He communicates to his father the conflicting rumours he hears as to the views of the different Continental Powers in regard to France, and urges him to sound the English ministers on the same subject. Edmund Burke's reply that he had seen Pitt and Grenville, and in a long and animated conversation had stated his views of policy in respect to revolutionary France. Though they looked with no favour on the state of things in that country, ministers resolved to maintain a *bonâ fide* neutrality. In a letter to his son, Burke expresses his deep distrust as to the political views of Leopold, the Emperor of Austria. Reasons for his distrust. His counsels to the French emigrants. His scheme of French government in the event of a restoration. Ministers decline to send Richard Burke on a secret mission to Berlin. Richard's return to England in November, 1791, and his departure for Dublin in the following January, as Secretary to the Catholic Board. Rare abilities he displayed in that capacity. His return to England in 1794. Coalition between the Rockingham Whigs and the party of Mr. Pitt. The Duke of Portland, Earl Fitzwilliam, Earl Spencer, and Mr. Windham take office under that minister. Earl Fitzwilliam to be Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and Richard Burke Chief Secretary. The Foxite Whigs still in opposition. Edmund Burke retires from Parliament, and his son is returned for the borough of Malton. His illness and untimely death in August, 1794. Dreadful shock to the father, from which he never recovers. Amiable character and great abilities of Richard Burke. Analysis of tract entitled "Thoughts on French Affairs,"

1791. The French Revolution compared with the Reformation of the sixteenth century from its profelytizing spirit, and its political ambition. It has partisans in every country. Elements of strength, and elements of decay in the different European states. Latent sympathy with the Revolution among many statesmen and courtiers brought up in the corrupt maxims of the eighteenth century. Revolutionary France, from her very frenzy, most potent for evil, and the Powers opposed to her most feeble for good. War the only remedy for such a state of things. Burke's next tract, "The Policy of the Allies," 1793. The intentions of the "Allied Powers" distrusted from their systematic neglect of the French princes, and of the French clergy, nobles, and magistrates. In any settlement of French affairs their part should be that of auxiliaries and mediators, and not of principals. The Allies had to deal not with *the geographical*, but with *the moral and revolutionary France*. France divided into two classes, the oppressors and the oppressed. The neglect of the latter by the Allies defeats their own policy. Warm praise bestowed by Burke on the emigrant clergy and nobles, and a just tribute to the two princes, Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII., and the Comte d'Artois, afterwards Charles X. The opinion that none but those neutral in the dreadful internal conflicts of France, should be chosen to reconstruct her society, reprobated as equally wicked and absurd. The right, in extreme cases, of an armed intervention in the internal concerns of a foreign state shown to be well-founded. Respect for the national feelings of the French, in the invasion of their country, strongly inculcated on the Allies. In case of a Restoration, the Catholic Church to be restored to her full rights and dignity, and the Calvinist communities to enjoy full toleration. The temperate monarchy of the three estates to be restored, and the old municipal and communal institutions revived in their full force. The regicides, the sanguinary leaders of the Jacobin clubs, and the men guilty of horrible cruelties and sacrileges, to be alone exempted from the indemnity. Lastly, the anti-Jacobin war, to be successful, must be conducted in the spirit of a *religious*, and not of a mere *national* war. Judgment on this tract. Burke's letter to Mr. W. Elliot in 1795, in reply to an attack of the Duke of Norfolk on the "Reflections." Extracts from this letter. False reforms can be counteracted only by true ones. In temperate monarchies the true republican spirit must blend with the monarchical. Crises where private individuals are invested with a sort of moral magistracy. This short letter remarkable for vigour of thought and of style. In 1796, Burke's letter to the Duke of Bedford. Account of the rise of the Bedford family. Touching allusion to the memory of his own son, and noble tribute to that of his friend, Lord

Keppel. Powers of sarcasm, pathos, and eloquent indignation displayed in this letter. Some literary defects pointed out. In 1796 appeared Burke's "Letters on a Regicide Peace." Mission of Lord Malmesbury to Paris, to make overtures of peace to the revolutionary Government, the occasion of these letters. The popular mind of Great Britain disheartened by military reverses, Burke seeks to raise and encourage. The French Revolution menaced no less the moral order and social stability of states, than their material prosperity. A new system of policy necessary to counteract its hostility. England, without certain ruin, cannot sever herself from the rest of Europe. England, if she sets above the claims of public virtue and public honour her trade and riches, will run the risk of forfeiting the latter. Contrast between the weak, hesitating policy of the Allies and the straightforward, energetic action of the Jacobin Republic. Separation of the cause of the people from that of their rulers, the principle of all the negotiations of Jacobinism. The setting up of what it calls natural boundaries, and national dignity, the rule of its dealings with foreign nations. Fatal consequences that would necessarily flow from an alliance with the Regicide Republic: namely, the loss of all honour, consistency, and independence. Four-fifths of the nation adverse to Jacobinism. A war of principles can be carried on only by popular enthusiasm. Example of England's sacrifices to check the ambition of Louis XIV. should stimulate her sons, in the present crisis, to redoubled exertions. Burke draws a frightful picture of the moral, social, and political condition of France in her interior. Her external influence, from many causes, general and special, likely to be equally disastrous. The Jacobins a SECT, as well as an armed power. The war against the Jacobins mismanaged. With them, the conflict one of principles; with the Allies, one of interests. On matters of interest, the different Powers were needs divided. England, waging a mere commercial war, suffered La Vendée to perish. The dangers, moral and political, that peace with the Regicide Republic would expose Great Britain to. The author describes the two revolutionary factions that ruled France—the infidel Philosophers and the infidel Republicans. The former furnished the principles; the latter gave to those principles the practical direction. The former aimed at the utter extirpation of religion at home and abroad; the latter, less fanatical in their impiety, were more circumspect in their proceedings. These republican statesmen were divided again into two parties, one of whom desired to make France surpass England as a naval Power, the other to render her the first military state in Europe. For forty years before the Revolution these two parties in the councils and legations of France struggled for the

ascendancy. The expedition in favour of the American insurgents not so much the cause as the effect of the republican spirit in the cabinet of Versailles. The republican form of government preferred, not for improving the internal condition of France, but for rendering her more powerful abroad. The material resources of France still great, and redoubled by her revolutionary frenzy. Her fanaticism to be encountered only by a Christian enthusiasm, like that of the Crusaders against the Moslems. Bad effects of Pitt's temporizing policy. Alliance with the Regicide Republic far more fatal than her hostility. Inutility of Lord Malmesbury's negotiations to convince Europe of England's moderation. Their inutility to satisfy domestic parties, whether among the supporters or the opponents of the war. No satisfactory results to be obtained by such negotiations; for the French Republic aimed at universal domination, and England could give her no equivalents if she consented to relinquish the countries she had conquered. The idea of the balance of power, moreover, spurned by the Revolution from the very first. Peace with the revolutionary Republic not necessitated by any failure in the material resources of Great Britain. The growing prosperity of all classes—the improvements in husbandry, the extension of commerce, the multiplication of manufactories, the increase in the revenue, proved by the author from statistical tables. Popularity of the war shown by the patriotic loans, and by the recent parliamentary elections. The wisdom of Burke's counsel in respect to La Vendée shown by the success of the Peninsular war seventeen years after his death.

LECTURE V.—PART I.*

THREE subjects which engaged the attention of Burke in the last twelve years of his life: the affairs of India, of Ireland, and of the French Revolution. Secret causes which made so many of the Anglo-Indians sympathize with the French Revolution. The religious and political sentiments long prevalent among many of them. Historic sketch of Hindostan. Its geographical position. Its climate, and its animal, mineral, and vegetable products. The architecture and

* This lecture was the only one not delivered. It may be considered as divided into two parts: one giving a historic sketch of India, and of the foreign European settlements in that country; and the second part tracing the rise and progress of the British power in that peninsula down to the impeachment of Warren Hastings.

sculpture, the poetry and philosophy of the ancient Hindoos. Their social system ; the divisions of castes ; their political and municipal institutions. Their domestic relations. The religions of India. Brahminism and Buddhism ; the characteristics of the two systems, and their respective influence. The countries where Buddhism prevails. Ancient history of Hindostan. Two branches of the Arian, the western and the eastern. The latter the ancestors of the Hindoos. From remote antiquity a great land-trade between India and the countries of Western Asia. India, from the most early times an object of curiosity to the Greeks. Expedition of Alexander the Great. Lasting results of that memorable event. Hindostan never formed one great empire, but was ever divided into a number of states, great and small. Two extensive kingdoms, Ayodha and Magada, flourished long before the time of Alexander the Great. After the age of that monarch and of his general, Seleucus Nicator, India again lost to view. Three hundred years later a solemn embassy sent to the Roman emperor Augustus by a Hindoo monarch, a great patron of letters. Nothing further known of India till a thousand years afterwards, the Mussulman Sultan, Mahmud the Ghiznevide, invades that country. Character of that monarch. His conquests. The Gaurian dynasty establishes its power at Delhi. Gengis-Khan. The Moguls, under his successors, invade India, yet are repulsed by princes of the Gaurian dynasty. The Affghan dynasty. Invasion of India by the Emperor Tamerlane. His descendant, Baber, in the sixteenth century, founds the Mogul Empire, whose seat is in Delhi. Character of this able prince. That empire reaches the zenith of its glory under the Emperor Akber. His character. Intestine commotions following on his reign. Aurungzebe, the greatest Mogul emperor after the reign of Akber. His abilities ; his vices. Disorders which ensue on his death. With Shah Alum II., pensioner of the British East India Company, virtually expires the empire of the great Mogul. Reflections on the growth and the decline of that empire. Rapid glance at the different European settlements in India. The maritime discoveries, extensive commerce, and colonial settlements of the Portuguese in India. Vasco da Gama and Francis and Alfonso Albuquerque. Colonial possessions of the Portuguese in the East extended and consolidated by the last-named great statesmen. Decline of the Portuguese power in India. Its causes. Rise, growth, and decline of the Dutch settlements. Trade, and not political power, the object of that people. French settlements in Hindostan and the Mauritius. Administrative and military genius of Dupleix, La Bourdonnaye, and Buffly. Rivalry of the French colonies with the British factories. Causes of the decline of the former.

LECTURE V.—PART II.

RISE and early growth of the British power in India. Foundation of the East India Company, in the year 1600. Mission of Sir Thomas Roe to the great Mogul. English factory at Surat. Island of Bombay, the dowry of Charles the Second's Portuguese Queen ceded to the East India Company. Various English factories on the Eastern coast of Hindostan. Cession of the village of Calcutta, and foundation of Fort William, in honour of King William III. Cession by the Mogul Emperor Farokhsir, in 1715, of three villages at Madras. Gradual growth of the three Presidencies of Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, each with municipal corporations and rights. Sketch of Lord Clive's career. His birth, his departure for India at an early age, and his brilliant military achievements in that country. The Black Hole of Calcutta. Indignation of the English settlers of Madras at that act of atrocious cruelty perpetrated on their countrymen. Clive charged by the factory of Madras to avenge the murder of the English. Recapture of Calcutta, and the storming of the city of the Hoogley. Clive, with the sanction of the authorities, declares war against Surajah Dowlah, author of the cruelties of the Black Hole of Calcutta. He marches with three thousand men against an army of sixty thousand, and gains over his foe the memorable battle of Plassey. Foundation of the British empire in India laid by that battle. Other military successes of Lord Clive. His great martial achievements stained by some acts of gross perfidy and fraud. His return to England. His reception by the Court and the public. He is raised to an Irish peerage. His wealth and parliamentary power in England. He is, after five years' absence from India, sent back to that country to correct abuses in its administration. His wife administrative reforms. His diplomatic skill. Proofs of disinterestedness. His farewell to India. Glance at the Christian missions in that country, Catholic and Protestant. For whom is India's final conversion reserved?—About the year 1780 the affairs of India much engage the attention of Parliament. Two committees of the House of Commons appointed for their investigation. Over one Dundas presides; over the other Burke. Extensive knowledge possessed by Burke of the moral, social, political, and economical condition of Hindostan. Searching inquiries of the committee over which he presided. Two valuable reports which, in 1783, issued from that committee, exclusively his work. Mr. Fox's East India Bill, in 1783. Its character. Burke, in all probability, not the author. His famous speech in support of this Bill. Wraxhall's and Masséy's unbiassed testimony. Its excellencies described. Short summary of it, together

with a few extracts. Rejection of Fox's East India Bill by the House of Lords. Dismission of the Coalition Ministry. Mr. Pitt's East India Bill passed by large majorities in both houses. Its superior merits described. Burke's famous speech on the payment of the Nabob of Arcot's debts. Brief account of the circumstances that led to the parliamentary motion. Fox's able opening speech. Burke's concluding oration. Its merits characterized. Some extracts given. His first speeches against Warren Hastings. Burke's feelings in regard to Hastings described by himself. Exaggeration of Lord Macaulay on this head. The great abilities and the great services of Warren Hastings no set-off against specific and heavy charges urged against him. Concurrence of Fox, Sheridan, and Pitt in this opinion of Burke's. Extracts from their speeches. Arrival of Warren Hastings, late Governor-General of India, in England, on 16th June, 1785. Burke's notice, four days afterwards, that he would, in the following session, move for a parliamentary inquiry into his administration of India. Challenge next session of Major Scott, the friend of Hastings, to Burke to bring forward his threatened motion. Declaration of the whole Opposition that they would support the motion. Announcement by Burke, in February, 1787, that he would move for an impeachment of Warren Hastings at the bar of the House of Lords. Charges against Hastings laid by Burke on the table of the House of Commons. Ability displayed by him in the framing of these charges. Pitt's complaint that they were too vague refuted by Burke and Fox. Hastings reads his defence at the bar of the House of Commons. Though able, it was too lengthy. First charge brought up by Burke on 1st day of June, 1786. It concerned the extermination of the Rohillas, a brave, industrious Affghan tribe. Subjugation of this unoffending people by English troops, hired out by Hastings to the Nabob of Oude for a considerable sum. Atrocious extermination of this tribe by the Nabob, unrebuked by the Governor-General. The minister Dundas defends, on this occasion, Hastings, whose conduct he had formerly reprobated. His pitiable speech. Burke's motion lost by a majority of fifty-five, in the House of Commons. Great exultation of the friends of Hastings. The second charge, called the Benares Charge, brought forward on the 13th day of June, of the same year, by Mr. Fox. This charge related to the extortion by Hastings of large annual sums from the Rajah of Benares, his deposition, and the violent seizure of his kingdom. Fox's able speech, and Pitt's defence of Hastings on most points, except on one exorbitant fine. Fox's charge supported by Pitt, to the great surprise of his friends, and affirmed by a majority of forty votes. The third charge, called the Begum Charge, brought forward in the next

session, on the 7th day of February, 1787, by Mr. Sheridan. This regarded the spoliation of the Begums, or princesses of Oude. These unhappy princesses robbed of their lands by the Governor-General, in concert with their profligate son; robbed, too, of immense treasures in money and jewels, and themselves and their attendants subjected to the most cruel treatment. Splendid oration of Sheridan on this charge. Genius and character of that orator described. Judgments of Burke, Pitt, Fox, and Windham on his Begum speech. Immense sensation it produced. No full report extant. Have its merits been exaggerated? The Begum charge supported by Pitt and many of his friends, and affirmed by a majority of 175 voices against 69. The remaining charges of a less grave character, and introduced by Mr. Thomas Pelham, Sir James Erskine, Mr. Windham, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr., afterwards Sir Philip, Francis. These charges sometimes carried by large majorities. The articles of impeachment drawn up by Burke, as chairman of the parliamentary committee, and laid by him on the table of the House of Commons. The main articles of impeachment warmly supported by Mr. Pitt. The report carried by 175 votes to 89. Burke, attended by the majority of the House of Commons, impeaches, in its name, at the bar of the Lords, the late Governor-General of India. That gentleman bound in heavy sureties to appear for his trial, in the next session, at the bar of that House. Opening of the trial of Warren Hastings, in Westminster Abbey, on the 13th day of February, 1788. Imposing character of that spectacle. Splendour of Burke's introductory speech, continued in four successive sittings. The peroration. The impression produced by that great speech. The next charge in the impeachment, relative to Cheyte Singh, the Rajah of Benares, conducted by Fox. The charge regarding the Begums of Oude entrusted again to Sheridan. This speech by no means so successful as the one in the House of Commons. The trial protracted by the course of proceeding demanded by Hastings's counsel. A further delay in this trial caused by the parliamentary discussions on the Regency Question. Charge of bribery and corruption against Hastings supported, in 1789, by Burke in three eloquent speeches. The few days in each session allotted by the Lords to the hearing of this important case the main cause of its long duration. The case for the prosecution having been concluded in 1791, the counsel for the prisoner open their defence. Unbecoming language of the prisoner's leading counsel, Mr. Law, towards Burke, and angry retorts of the latter. Defence for the prisoner concluded in 1794. Burke's Reply. In a succession of speeches, continued for nine days, all the charges against Warren Hastings recapitulated and enforced by him. Vote of thanks by the House of Commons to

Burke and the other Managers of the impeachment. He and his colleagues exonerated by Pitt and the Speaker of the House from all unjust allegations. Burke returns thanks. He retires from Parliament. Sentence of acquittal in regard to Hastings pronounced in 1795, by the Lords. Long duration and heavy expenses of this trial a severe penalty to the accused party. Great oratorical excellencies of Burke's several orations in this state trial. Occasional asperity of his language caused by the various provocations he received. The length of the trial not attributable to him and to the other Managers of the impeachment. The causes of delay explained by Pitt and Dundas, as well as by Burke and Fox; their remarks confirmed by Lord Macaulay. Hastings's acquittal due to the technical forms of the criminal law, rather than to his innocence, at least on the chief charges of the impeachment. Such the judgment of the Marquis of Wellesley, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Prior, Dr. French Laurence, Mr. Charles Grant, Earl Russell, Lord Macaulay, and Mr. Mill, the historian of India. Beneficial results of the impeachment attested by Sir John Malcolm, Mr. Macknight, and the *Quarterly Review*. Wrongs perpetrated in India ninety years ago visited with divine chastisements in our time. Reflections on the general results of British rule in India.

LECTURE VI.

RICHARD BURKE, Edmund's son, acting as secretary to the Catholic Committee of Dublin. His representations to the English Ministers attended with benefit. His efforts, on arriving in Dublin, to advance by various means the cause of Catholic Emancipation. Difficulties which beset him on every side. Singular skill and tact he displayed in his new office. Extracts from a letter of Richard Burke's to Lord Grenville, bearing testimony to the loyalty and the many virtues of the Irish Catholics. His letter to his father on the anomalous state of political parties in Ireland. Reflections on the causes of those anomalies. The Orange-Ascendancy party not a Conservative, but a revolutionary party, and why. Extracts from a letter of Richard Burke on the loyalty, and the many virtues of Irish Catholics. Extract from a letter of Edmund Burke, commending the eminent talents of not a few among their political leaders. Anti-revolutionary spirit of the bulk of Irish Catholics attested by Richard Burke. Analysis of a long letter from Richard Burke to a relative, describing the part he played in Dublin, as secretary to the Catholic Committee. English ministers, as

he shows, disposed to adopt a policy of justice and of conciliation towards Catholic Ireland, but thwarted in this purpose by the Irish executive. Divisions fought to be sown by the Castle officials among the Catholics. The party of Lord Kenmare, on the one hand, and the Catholic Committee, on the other, supported by the bulk of the Irish population. Rejection of the Catholic petition for the elective franchise by the Irish parliament. Remark of Edmund Burke that not the English Government, but the Irish Ascendancy Party, rule the Castle. English government in regard to Ireland too careless and apathetic. The national well-being of Ireland, according to Burke, involved in Catholic Emancipation. Analysis of his elaborate letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe on the claims of the Irish Catholics. To this body the worthy baronet desired to make many political concessions, though clogged with certain odious restrictions. All the objections of the baronet to an extension of the elective franchise, which he had divided under three heads, first, his notion of the word "state;" secondly, his conception of its purely Protestant character; and thirdly, the presumed principles of the Revolution of 1688, met and victoriously refuted by Burke. This admirable letter a repertory of arguments for the Catholic claims. A Bill conferring on the Catholics of Ireland the elective franchise, and admitting them to the highest grades in the army and navy, with a few exceptions, brought in by the Government into the Irish legislature soon after the publication of this letter. Associations recommended by Burke to the Irish Catholics, as needful under their circumstances, though subject to abuses that must be guarded against. His love of genuine freedom never chilled by the horror of revolution. But not carried away in the last years of his life by imagination; for his predictions then uttered have been literally verified. Solemn warning addressed by him in 1796 to his Catholic fellow-countrymen. Misfortunes they have incurred whenever they have disregarded the teaching of their clergy, and the counsels of their patriotic leaders. Departure of Richard Burke, in 1794, from Dublin. After the coalition of the leading Whigs with Mr. Pitt's Ministry in that year, the appointment of Earl Fitzwilliam as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and of Richard Burke as Chief Secretary. Death of young Burke that very year, a severe blow to Ireland's hopes. Arrival in Dublin, in January, 1795, of Earl Fitzwilliam as the new viceroy. Enthusiastic reception by the Catholic population, as he was known to be charged with the carrying out of a full measure of relief. Introduction of a Bill to that effect into the Irish Parliament by Grattan. Intrigues of the Ascendancy faction against Earl Fitzwilliam. Religious prejudices of the King excited. Recall of this nobleman after but two months'

tenure of office. Burke's profound grief and disappointment at this measure. This act the most fatal error ever committed by Mr. Pitt, and the prelude to a long train of disasters for Ireland. Judgment of Bishop Hufsey on this event. The departure of Earl Fitzwilliam a day of mourning for Dublin. Burke, in a second letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, unbosoms his feelings of grief and dismay at the state of Ireland. Friendship of Burke for Bishop Hufsey. His correspondence with that prelate in the last years of his life on the course of the French Revolution, and on the ecclesiastical and political affairs of Ireland. His interest in the success of the seminary of Maynooth. His remarkable zeal for the spiritual independence of the Catholic Church. His ideas of clerical education. A higher estimate of his genius and character afforded by the correspondence edited by Earl Fitzwilliam. His health undermined by grief for the loss of his son, and by dejection at the political aspect of the world. In February, 1797, he repairs to Bath for the recovery of his health, and accompanied by his friends, Mr. Windham and Dr. French Laurence. No benefit derived from the change of air. His touching letter from Bath to Mrs. Leadbeater. His return to Beaconsfield. Reflections on the state of the Continent and of Ireland at that time. Death of Burke, 9th day of July, 1797. Description of his last moments by Dr. French Laurence. His funeral and burial at Beaconsfield. His elegant mansion there. Mrs. Burke. The statesman Windham. Burke's moral character, considered in all the relations of life. The French School at Penn a monument of his beneficence. His piety. His leanings to the Catholic Church. A religious conversation reported to have been held between him and Dr. Hufsey. Intellectual qualities of Burke. His conversational powers described to the author by Mr. Charles Butler. His wit and humour. A remarkable saying of Dr. Johnson about him verified. Burke's various learning. His diction. Judicious selection of early models for composition. His style of eloquence, a combination of varied excellencies. His method and powers of reasoning. Some few literary defects pointed out in his works. His European influence. Testimony of Frederick Schlegel and De Bonald to his great genius. Burke as a publicist compared with Count de Maistre and Professor Görres.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I. Necessity of a close union of interests and of sentiments between the Upper and the Lower Houses of the British Parliament. Note II. Vindication of Burke's views of France from a recent attack of Earl Russell. Note III. Autograph Letter from Pope Pius VI. to Edmund Burke. Minor notes.



LECTURES ON THE LIFE, &c., OF EDMUND BURKE.

FIRST LECTURE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IN the dreary period of religious persecution that from the Reformation downwards Ireland had to pass through, the first quarter of the eighteenth century, it has been justly said, was perhaps the most desolate.

The Revolution of 1688, which in England had been in many respects a defensive and conservative revolution, was in Ireland an utterly destructive one, and in Scotland partially so.

A misguided, though honourable and well-meaning Prince, by a series of acts more foolish still than arbitrary, alienated the affections of the aristocracy, and

of the bulk of the people of England, who at the outset of his reign had been so devoted to his throne and person. Deaf to the remonstrances of the Sovereign Pontiff, as well as of the great majority of his Catholic counsellors, English and Irish, he compromised the cause of his own Church, and that of the noble people of this country, who so generously shed their blood in his defence. Thus the glorious opportunity was lost of laying the basis of a great religious pacification, of allaying religious and national animosities, and so healing by degrees the deep wounds of time. It were too painful to repeat the sad story. After heroic deeds, the Irish people succumbed in the unequal struggle. A large portion of their army, headed by an illustrious chief, emigrated to foreign lands, and for long years filled Europe with the fame of their martial deeds. But at home what a spectacle met the eye! Violated treaties—cruel and sweeping confiscations—the dispersion of the native nobility and gentry—the banishment of the venerable priesthood—the proscription of education—wicked laws, that by setting brother against brother, and son against father, unhinged all the family relations. Such, I say, was the spectacle at home. Thus did the perverse ingenuity of a cruel legislation strive to convert religion itself, the last solace of the afflicted, “the balm of hurt minds,” into a spring of bitterness. Religion, the basis of the family, and the prop of society, was thus to be made an instrument of social discord and domestic strife.

Such a complication of evils would have crushed the heart of any other people but the one, whose descendants I have now the honour of addressing.

But, like holy Job, Ireland treasured up in her bosom the hope of redemption ; she knew that her Redeemer lived, and that in the latter days she would see her God ; she knew that her Church would one day be emancipated, and her civil rights and liberties restored ; for she knew that the nations faithful to Christ will never die. But to her eternal honour be it said, it was in that hour of her extreme debility and depression she found strength enough to give birth to one who, by the power of his word, was first to loosen the fetters of his brethren, who was to stamp an immortal name on the code of British legislation, to become a light of political wisdom to the nations of Europe, and to take a foremost place among the great writers and orators of all time.



EDMUND BURKE was born in Dublin, on the 12th of January, 1729. Some have attempted to connect his paternal ancestors with the great Anglo-Norman family of the De Burghs, of which the Earl of Clanricarde is the representative. But this genealogy, it appears, cannot be substantiated. Burke's great grandfather, it is nearly certain, was Alderman John Bourke, who was Mayor of Limerick in the year 1645, and played a conspicuous

part in the civil wars of that disastrous period. He was possessed of an estate near Limerick to the value of three thousand pounds a-year.

On the capture of Limerick by the Parliamentary troops under Ireton, that estate, like the property of all faithful Irish Catholics and loyalists of that time, was confiscated; and with all he could gather from the wreck of his fortunes, Alderman John Bourke settled in the county of Cork. In the reign of James II., his son, it is conjectured with much probability, recovered a portion of his property; for Edmund Burke's literary executors positively affirmed that his grandfather possessed an estate of three thousand a-year near Limerick. This estate, on the accession of King William III., most probably shared the same fate as befel the property of all devoted Catholics and partisans of the House of Stuart. The surmise is the more reasonable, as it is certain that Richard Burke, the father of Edmund, was not wealthy, and that he resided at Limerick before he settled in Dublin. There he became an attorney of extensive practice.

On his mother's side, the subject of this biography belonged to the powerful Catholic family of the Nagles, established in the county of Cork. She is said, and with great show of probability, to have been descended from Sir Richard Nagle, who was attorney-general to King James II., and one of the brightest ornaments of the Irish Parliament in that reign. It is through the Nagles, of Castletown Roche, my dis-

tinguished friend and colleague, Profeffor Henneffy, is connected with the illuftrious fubject of this memoir.

Burke's father was a member of the Anglican Church ; but his mother was educated a Catholic, and to the end of her life remained true to her faith. His elder brother, Garrett, and his younger, Richard, were, like himfelf, brought up Proteftants ; but his fifter Juliana was educated in the religion of her mother. This lady, in the year 1765, married Mr. French, of Loughrea ; and her grandfon, the late Mr. Haviland Burke, not long ago refided in London, and was the neareft representative of the auguft ftatefman. Garrett Burke died comparatively young ; but Richard lived through life to be the faithful companion and affectionate kinfman of Edmund.

Edmund, whose health in childhood was delicate, was frequently fent from Dublin to his maternal relatives in Caftletown Roche. Thefe Catholic relatives, who were extremely kind to him, he learned to love more and more as he grew up ; and it was doubtlefs in their fociety, as well as from the lips of his mother, he imbibed that ftrong fympathy with the Catholic Church, which I fhall have afterwards occafion to notice.

Edmund and his two brothers were placed by their father, in the year 1741, at a claffical fchool at Ballitore, in the county of Kildare. This fchool was held by a Quaker, named Abraham Shackleton, of whom Burke ever afterwards fpoke in terms of reverential love. The fon, Richard Shackleton, was Edmund's

school-fellow ; and in all their after-life the two were united in the bonds of the closest friendship. At this period, Richard Burke gave greater promise of talent than his brother Edmund ; his spirits were livelier, and his mind more quick of apprehension.

Edmund Burke, in the year 1743, matriculated in Trinity College, Dublin. He now carried on a correspondence with his friend, Richard Shackleton ; and from his letters we see that he had at school laid in a fair stock of classical knowledge.

The letters, too, evince those sentiments of piety and virtue, that distinguished this great man through every period of his life. I was much affected by a passage, in which he writes to his friend, in reference, doubtless, to the seductions of a capital : " Oh ! how happy are you, who live in the country ! I assure you, my friend, that without the superior grace of God, I should find it very difficult to be commonly virtuous."*

This is the cry of infirm nature panting for divine succour ! I thought to myself, how highly Burke would have prized those supernatural aids to virtue, that Catholics possess in such rich abundance, and which, alas ! too many of them but little appreciate, or, at least, but little resort to !

At the university his course of studies was desultory. He thus describes to Richard Shackleton how he was in turns carried away by different pursuits. " First," says he, " I was greatly taken with natural philo-

* Correspondence, vol. 1. pp. 9, 10.

fophy, which, while I should have given my mind to logic, employed me incessantly. This I call my *furor mathematicus*. But this worked off as soon as I began to read it in college.

“Then I turned back to logic and metaphysics. Here I remained a good while, and with much pleasure; and this was my *furor logicus*—a disease very common in the days of ignorance, and very uncommon in these enlightened times. Next succeeded the *furor historicus*, which also had its day, but is now no more; being entirely absorbed in the *furor poeticus*, which (as skilful physicians assure me) is as difficultly cured as a disease very nearly akin to it, namely, the itch. Nay, the Hippocrates of poets says so expressly: ‘*tenet insanabile multos scribendi cacoethes.*’”*

Here we see the youthful mind of Burke in a state of fermentation. Its great and various faculties are jostling each other in the struggle for expansion. He knows not yet his intellectual calling, whether it be for poetry, or for natural science, or for history, or for philosophy. But wait awhile: out of that fermentation will come forth a beautiful consistence; out of that chaotic struggle of the elements will rise a world of harmonious order. This passion for poetry, history, science, and philosophy, proves a combination of latent powers, that, responding to the ideal of Cicero in his “*De Oratore*,” was destined to form the consummate orator, and the great political writer.

* Correspondence, vol. i. p. 22, anno 1746.

That Burke did not obtain more brilliant successes in his academic career, is a fact that ought not to surprise us. These versatile and richly-gifted minds, as I remarked in my Lectures on Chateaubriand, come to maturity late. They rarely shine in the school, and take not the highest honours even in the university. Their very quickness and versatility of talent make them at first impatient of a mental discipline which eventually is necessary for the development of their powers.

In 1750, Edmund Burke bade farewell to his parents in Dublin, visited his affectionate relatives by the Blackwater, and then proceeded to London, to keep his law-terms in the Middle Temple. He has left us a pleasing account of the first impressions which the sight of the great English metropolis, as it was a hundred years ago, made on his mind. He visited with peculiar interest Westminster Abbey, and the tombs of its glorious dead, and that Chapel of S. Stephen's, which in after-years was to re-echo his eloquent accents, and where he was to win immortal fame.

During the first years of his residence in London his health was delicate, and he frequently found it necessary to take the benefit of country air. He visited Bristol, which he was afterwards to represent in Parliament, and travelled in Wales. These occasions served not only to restore his health, but to give him an insight into the manners and character of the people among whom his destiny was henceforth to be cast.

Three years had Burke been residing in London ; and though his father knew him to be of steady, industrious habits, he was not satisfied with the progress his son was making in his legal studies. Edmund's repugnance to the law became every day stronger, till at last he entirely gave it up. The question here occurs, would Burke, with all his genius, his eloquence, his humour, his industry and perseverance, have attained to eminence at the bar ? His success, I think, would have been questionable. His mind was too discursive and philosophic, his imagination too ardent, his passion for literature and politics too strong, to allow him to support the trammels of jurisprudence. The jurist is engaged with *the forms of law*, the statesman with *the spirit of legislation*—two pursuits which, I need not say, are very distinct in character. This is the reason, I think, why eminent, and even eloquent lawyers, rarely succeed as general politicians in Parliament. This rule, of course, like every other, admits of exceptions. Plunket, Brougham, and O'Connell may be cited as extraordinary instances of the union of forensic eminence and of Parliamentary success. But Erskine, the most eloquent of English barristers, failed—and failed miserably—in Parliament. Of Montesquieu, it is observed by M. de Bonald, that “the great publicist was but an ordinary judge.” And more especially do my remarks apply to English law. One of our ablest law-writers, the late Mr. Fonblanque, in his “Treatise on Equity,” says, that “British jurispru-

dence cannot lay claim to the title of a science. And hence, I think, the little attractions it possesses for the men of thought, as well as for the men of imagination. It is such a mass of confused details and unconnected precedents—there are in it so few luminous principles—and the whole study is of so purely technical a kind!”*

In one of his earliest fragments, entitled, “An Essay on the English Law,” Burke furnishes us on this matter with the results of his own individual experience:—“Young men,” he says, “were sent away from the study of the law with an incurable (and if we regard the manner of handling rather than the substance), with a very well-founded disgust. The famous antiquary, Spelman, though no man was better formed for the most laborious pursuits, in the beginning deserted the study of the law in despair, though he returned to it again when a more confirmed age, and a strong desire of knowledge, enabled him to wrestle with every difficulty.”† And in many of his later writings, Burke, while he renders full homage to the importance of jurisprudence, yet describes it as a science fitted rather to sharpen, than to expand and liberalize the mind, and ill-calculated, indeed, to form a statesman.

Mr. Richard Burke, sen., became more and more dissatisfied with his son Edmund for not prosecuting

* In Germany, for example, the study of the Roman jurisprudence is closely connected with historical and philosophical studies.

† Collected Works, v. 10, p. 553, Ed. London, 1812.

with greater diligence his legal studies. The pecuniary remittances from Dublin to the young Templar became more scanty. The latter, naturally desirous to comply with the wishes of his parent, yet unable to resist his strong passion for politics and literature, was now in the most painful position. At last he abandoned the law, and gave himself up wholly to letters, and was thus almost entirely thrown upon his own resources. This step completely alienated the affections of his father, who was not reconciled with his son till shortly before his death.

In 1756, Edmund Burke brought out his first work, entitled, "*A Vindication of Natural Society; or A View of the Miseries and Evils arising to Mankind from every Species of Civil Society; in a Letter to Lord —, by a late Noble Writer.*" This essay was an exquisite piece of satire on the principles of Lord Bolingbroke, whose posthumous works, which were thoroughly deistical, had been published but two years before. Burke showed that Bolingbroke's sophistical arguments against the Christian religion might be equally well turned against civil society. So well did he succeed in imitating the noble writer's graceful style, that the public were utterly deceived as to the authorship; and Mallet, Bolingbroke's executor, had to declare that the essay was not the production of his deceased friend. This clever piece of protracted irony, kept up with such spirit, was, however, dangerous; for many people believed the author

to be in earnest, and gave credence to his simulated sophistry. The essay is remarkable for the purity and vigour of the diction, and the easy and musical flow of the periods.

How astonishing, that a young man of twenty-seven should be able to pass off on the British public his first literary essay as the production of one of the most eloquent writers in the English language, one who combined, with much of the vigour and dignity of our old masters of the seventeenth century, an ease, a refinement, and a harmony, to which they can make no pretension. Thus Burke already showed himself a master in composition. The clear, bright dawn of intellect announced a glorious noon.

A few months after the work just noticed, there appeared from the same pen, "A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful." Of this book little need here be said. For so young a man as its author then was, the undertaking was much too arduous. The general theory is unsound, and even in part preposterous; for the philosophy of the last century, generally so false and superficial in all its views, was not without its influence on the work. But many detached observations are true as well as ingenious; and most of the illustrations are excellent. In the last century the work enjoyed great popularity, and even now is much read.

The style of this work is more temperate and subdued than any other of Burke's. Surprise has not un-

frequently been expressed that his later writings should exhibit far more imaginative power, than the early productions of his mind. But surely the imagination keeps pace with the growth of the other intellectual faculties—the memory, the judgment, and the understanding. It is fed and sustained by experience and observation, and invigorated by the acquisitions of knowledge. Is not this fact attested by the history of all literature? Were not the grandest dramas of Shakespeare composed towards the close of his career? Can the “*Comus*”—the youthful product of Milton’s Muse—sustain for a moment a comparison with the work of his old age, the “*Paradise Lost*?” The Muse of Dryden, too, in advanced age, shone brighter than in youth. And was not the most powerful and eloquent of Bossuet’s “*Funeral Orations*,” the one on the great Condé, delivered at a time when, as he himself said, his hoary locks reminded him of the account he would ere long have to render to his Divine Master?

In the history of Art the same phenomenon is perceptible.

In the first productions of the great painters, we notice, combined with an air of lightness, grace, and elegance, a certain sobriety of conception—a certain timidity of execution. But as their powers are more matured, their designs become bolder and more majestic, their drawing freer and more decided, their colouring deeper, their expression more intense, their grouping more diversified.

As regards writers, the fact in question admits, I think, of a philosophical explanation.

In the childhood and the first youth of genius, we see the buddings of that marvellous faculty—the creative imagination. Then the flower for a time closes its petals, and loses its scent ; and later again, it suddenly expands, and opens its chalice to the dews of heaven, and to the rays of the genial sun, and fills the air around with its fragrance. Or, to drop this figurative language, childhood and early youth feel the first stir of strong imaginings—the first anticipations of that mysterious power which is to form the great poet, or the great orator and writer. Then, later, adolescence has a craving for the accurate investigation of truth, for the definition and the classification of the objects of knowledge, and for the clear analysis of material notions, and of spiritual and abstract ideas ; and so distrusts the influence of imagination, as an element calculated to disturb this mental process. But manhood at length comes, and finds by experience that the union of imagination with the powers of analysis, research, and reflection, is needed for the achievement of great intellectual works.

But independently of these more general considerations, there were peculiar circumstances in the case of Burke, that accounted for the gorgeous imagery and fervid eloquence which characterized his later writings. Style, I need not say, must ever be adapted to the subject-matter ; and the exciting and momentous

themes which engaged his latter years could not possibly be treated with effect in the same strain as those which had occupied his youth and manhood. How could a didactic essay on Taste, or a speech on lavish expenditure in the public administration, or on the removal of certain restrictions on trade, or on the irregular play of political parties in the first years of George III., or even on the policy of conciliating the American colonies, call forth the reflective powers, rouse the feelings, and kindle the imagination of this great writer, like the giant wrongs, tyranny, rapacity, and cruelty perpetrated by Warren Hastings and his agents in India, or the impieties, crimes, follies, and abominations witnessed in the first French Revolution? To suppose that the Impeachment of the great Indian official, or the reflections on the French catastrophe, and the letters on "a Regicide Peace," should have been couched in the same calm, temperate language as the "Inquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful," and the speech on "Economical Reform," is to say that those rapt and glowing seers of Judah—Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel—when they denounced the transgressions of the People of God, or foretold the Divine judgments impending over them, or unfolded the future glories of Messiah and of His Kingdom, should have written with the sober, sententious wisdom of the Book of Proverbs, or in the plain, unadorned style of the Books of Kings.

His intense application to literary pursuits having

impaired his health, Burke now proceeded to Bath for the benefit of its air and waters. There he became acquainted with Dr. Nugent, an Irish Catholic physician, settled in that city. This gentleman treated him with the greatest kindness, and invited him to take up his residence in his house, till such time as he should recover his strength. Burke accordingly accepted the invitation. Here for Miss Nugent—who during his illness had evinced for him the kindest sympathy—he conceived a strong affection. On his recovery, he repaired to London, and then proposed to the young lady. She accepted his offer, and having obtained the consent of her father, was married to Burke in the winter of 1756, and (as is thought to be most probable), in the city of London itself.

Some have said that this lady was a Catholic, and after her marriage conformed to the Protestant religion. But the better opinion seems to be, that both herself and her mother were members of the Presbyterian Church. The virtues, amiability, and personal attractions of Mrs. Burke were highly commended by her contemporaries, Miss Burney, afterwards Madame D'Arblay, by Mrs. Hannah More, by Mr. Hardy, in his "Life of Lord Charlemont," and even by the fastidious and caustic Sir Philip Francis, the reputed author of the "Letters of Junius." Quiet, gentle, and unobtrusive, Mrs. Burke's influence was rather felt than seen in her own domestic circle. For forty years this excellent lady, like some benign, ministering spirit, threw

light and gladness over a home, where, amid all the agitations of political life, and all the storms of factious obloquy, her illustrious consort never failed to find peace and happiness.

During the first years of their married life, Mr. and Mrs. Burke lived in the same house with Dr. Nugent. This gentleman was not only skilful in his profession, but was a man of very general intellectual cultivation; so that he was among the earliest members admitted into the literary club over which Dr. Samuel Johnson presided. Here he had often to witness a brilliant passage of arms between his son-in-law and the great intellectual gladiator of English literature and English conversation.

Now Burke undertook an abridgment of the “History of England,” fragments of which still subsist, and are written in a clear, animated style. The author, in extolling the civilizing influences of the Catholic Church, and even the services rendered by the monastic orders to learning and to civil society, already evinced that remarkable freedom from the vulgar Protestant prejudices which distinguished him in after-life.

In 1758 he proposed to the publisher, Mr. Dodsley, the plan of an annual periodical, which should embrace the history, politics, statistics, literature, and miscellaneous news of the current year. The plan was approved by Mr. Dodsley; and “*The Annual Register*” was established—a periodical which still subsists, having lived for upwards of a hundred years. No work could

have been better devised for bringing out, and, at the same time, improving the talents and extending the knowledge of Burke, and thus duly qualifying him for the career of public life. During his abode in London he had laid in an ample stock of information, had cultivated the acquaintance of literary men, and had been a frequent attendant in the Gallery of the House of Commons. The early volumes of "The Annual Register" were under his direction, and were, in great part, written by himself. It was an immense advantage for him to be able to go to Parliament with a mind thus well prepared, by previous study and reflection, for the discharge of his legislative duties. How different was the case with his two great Parliamentary rivals, the younger Pitt and Charles James Fox! The former, though with talents so precocious, and possessed of a classical lore beyond his years, was, from his early entrance into official life, precluded from adding much to his stock of knowledge. And the latter, excellent Greek and Latin scholar as he was, yet, by the vortex of dissipation into which he was carried away, was diverted from the path of earnest study and reflection.

A vacancy having occurred in the British Consulship at Madrid, Burke, through the mediation of the Dukes of Queensberry, applied for the place; but the application was not heeded by the elder Pitt, then Prime Minister of England.

About this time, Burke was introduced by Lord Charlemont to Mr. William Gerard Hamilton, better

known by the name of "Single-speech Hamilton." This gentleman was distinguished for his eloquence, as well as for his talents for business. He had won the confidence of the Earl of Halifax, and when that nobleman was made Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, he appointed him to be chief secretary. Mr. Hamilton requested Burke to act as his private secretary. This offer the latter willingly accepted, as the situation was calculated not only to promote his pecuniary interests, but to enable him, as he thought, to render some substantial services to his beloved country. Accordingly, in 1761, he proceeded with his patron to Dublin, and arrived in time to be reconciled with his father in his last illness.

Ireland was still pining under the yoke of the Penal Laws; and the generous soul of Burke sought every means to alleviate the sorrows of his desolate country. One of the first expedients devised for breaking through the fatal network of laws that held the land enthralled, was to raise six regiments of Irish Catholics, officered by gentlemen of their creed, in order to serve the allied court of Lisbon, then menaced with hostile invasion. But even this first feeble attempt at conciliation, though supported with much ability by Secretary Hamilton in the Irish House of Commons, was effectually resisted by the Protestant bigotry of that day. On this and several subsequent occasions Hamilton astonished the House by his displays of eloquence. It was in England he acquired the nick-

name of "Single-speech Hamilton;" for, having in the English House of Commons delivered a very able speech, he feared by another to compromise his reputation, and so remained for ever afterwards a silent member. Yet so high was his reputation for talent, that he was one of those to whom, for a time, the "Letters of Junius" were attributed.

During his stay at the Castle, Burke devoted considerable attention to the Penal Laws, and commenced an elaborate history of them, whereof interesting fragments still subsist. Not content with this labour, he drew up a formal petition to the King on behalf of his Catholic fellow-countrymen, praying His Majesty to sanction the removal of their many civil disabilities. This document, on leaving Ireland, he entrusted to the care of Mr. John Curry, a literary Catholic gentleman of this city; and, singular to say, this identical petition was fourteen years afterwards presented by the Irish Catholics to His Majesty King George III.—a petition which, as you know, was followed by the first relaxation of the Penal Laws in the year 1778. So literally true is it, that Edmund Burke laid the first foundation-stone of his country's religious freedom! He began the construction of that temple, which was afterwards carried on by Grattan and Plunket, and brought to a glorious consummation by the genius and energy of O'Connell.

During his abode in Dublin, he formed a close friendship with Sir Hercules Langrishe, an able member

of the Irish Parliament, and one animated with the most ardent zeal for the enfranchisement of his Catholic fellow-countrymen. With this gentleman, Burke held many conversations on the state of Ireland—conversations which he recalled thirty years afterwards, when in his last illness he dictated a letter to that Baronet on the condition of Irish Catholics. Thus, from the earliest to the latest moment of his political life, the august image of his sorrowing country was ever present to his mind. *Ante lumina semper cara parentis imago.*

Three years had Burke been private secretary to Mr. Gerard Hamilton, and for all his services had received lavish promises, indeed, but no pecuniary remuneration whatsoever. At length, through the mediation of the Primate Stone, and of Lord Halifax, Hamilton procured for him a government pension of £300 per annum. Before he had received this pension, and at the time he accepted it, he told Hamilton that he must have a portion of his time to himself; that he was resolved to keep up the cultivation of literature; and that he felt it necessary to look also to the improvement of his fortune. Hamilton at length undertook to fulfil some of his fair promises, but attached to them conditions which divested them of all grace, as well as of utility to their object. He engaged to insure out of his own private fortune a certain income to Burke, on condition of his devoting his time and energies exclusively to his service. This absurd, as

well as arrogant, demand Burke courteously, but most firmly declined. Hamilton then taxed him with ingratitude; but Burke, both in conversation and by letter, remonstrated against so unreasonable a pretension on the part of his patron, one which would blight all his prospects of public usefulness and literary fame, and render him for life the abject slave of a private individual. At last Hamilton refused to have any intercourse with Burke. The latter having vainly endeavoured to bring about a reconciliation, thought it best, in order to be under no obligation to one whose conduct towards him had been so preposterous, as well as arrogant, to resign into his hands the government pension which he had been instrumental in procuring.

This step was utterly uncalled for, for the pension had been well earned by Burke's services; and though it had been obtained through the influence of his patron, yet the onerous and absurd conditions which, in his presumption, he now chose to affix to this act of Royal bounty, had never been agreed to by the recipient. But in all money transactions, Burke carried disinterestedness to the nicest point of delicacy. Hamilton and his friends quite misrepresented the history of this affair, and so sought to tarnish the spotless reputation of this excellent man. Burke, therefore, in vindication of his character, addressed letters to Mr. Hely Hutchinson, Mr. Flood, and other distinguished members of the Irish Parliament, to explain

the origin and circumstances of this quarrel. Thus was he a second time thrown on his own resources; and, at the age of thirty-seven, and charged with the care of a family, he had, as it were, to begin the world anew. At this very time, however, his elder brother having died, he inherited a small property in land, that gave him the same amount of income as the pension he had just resigned.

At the same time, too, occurred another event destined to exercise the most decisive influence on his future destiny. On the 17th of July, 1765, he was, by his friend and kinsman, Mr. William Burke, and by a Member of Parliament, Mr. William Fitzherbert, introduced to the Marquis of Rockingham, who had just been made Prime Minister of England. This nobleman was much pleased with Burke, and shortly afterwards requested him to be his private secretary. Through the influence of Earl Verney, he was soon brought into Parliament as a representative for the borough of Wendover.

And here, now as the illustrious subject of this biography enters on the great arena of public life, is the fitting place to take a glance at the various political parties which then in England contended for power.

After the battle of Culloden the Jacobites became a nearly extinct party in England, and the drafting of the Highlanders into the English army gave the last blow to the power they had so long possessed in Scot-

land. Under the energetic administration of the elder Pitt, the two parties of the Tories and the Whigs became more and more united. There was, in fact, no substantial difference between the two. The Tories of that day, like the Whigs, acknowledged the Hanoverian dynasty, recognized the Revolution-Settlement of 1688, with its various consequences, and were equally, and even more, attached than the Whigs to the Anglican Establishment. "It is easy and plain," says Lord Stanhope, "to state by what name each of those parties (the Whigs and the Tories) called itself, or at what place it met; but hard is the task of defining by what principles or opinions they were kept asunder." At that period the line between the new divisions of Whigs and Tories was very far less distinct than it afterwards became; and the line between the various sections of the Whigs was more shadowy still.

When George III. mounted on the throne in 1760, all parties alike rallied round his person. Such a unanimous feeling of loyalty had not been witnessed in England for forty-five years. His English birth and education, as well as his moral worth, endeared him to all classes. His correspondence with his Ministers proves that his good sense and his talents for business were far superior to what the vulgar estimation holds them. Yet was he a Prince of contracted understanding and obstinate temper. It was unfortunate that such a Prince should wish to resume the

exercise of those rights which, since the death of William III., had not been exerted by any of his successors. George III. did not wish to remain a cypher in the Constitution. But he had not the judgment to know when, and how far, to exercise his prerogatives. It is clear that, unless in cases of primary importance, and where the most sacred interests are at stake, the monarch should act cordially with his Ministers and his Parliament. A meddling of the Sovereign in the details of Administration is as hurtful to his own prerogative, as it is injurious to the welfare of the nation. The whole subject of the relations of the Crown to the Parliament, and of the two Houses to each other, and to the nation, as they existed in the old Catholic Mediæval Constitution and in that of 1688 respectively, will be discussed in my Second Lecture.

All that at present need be said, is that under Lord Bute's Administration, an abuse was made of a true and recognized principle. The Royal interference, instead of being exerted only occasionally, and for high and sacred purposes, was exercised too systematically, and for vulgar objects. A party called the "King's Friends" arose, that interfered with the regular action of the Ministry, thwarted its measures, distracted the Parliament, and threw confusion into public affairs. This party did not prevent, as Burke observed in his "Thoughts on Present Discontents," men most obnoxious to the King from being thrust into office. Some of these men were courtly syc-

phants, or greedy place-hunters; but others were men as independent in character as in fortune, confiding in the principles and intentions of the Sovereign.

It is thought that, in the work above referred to, Burke has not sufficiently discriminated between the good and the bad elements in this party. It is clear, however, that such a party was calculated ultimately to bring the Royal Prerogative into disrepute.

It was only after the retirement of Lord Bute from the helm of affairs, Burke appeared on the arena of public life.

Let me first speak of the party with which he became connected, and under whose banner he entered Parliament.

The new Premier, the Marquis of Rockingham, to whom he now acted as private secretary, and with whom he was henceforth bound by the ties of the closest friendship, was a nobleman descended on the maternal side from the Marquis of Strafford. But he was distinguished not more for high lineage and ample possessions than for his unfulled integrity, his firm adherence to his principles, his prudence, and his bland, conciliatory manners. With more judgment and forethought, he possessed many of the sterling and amiable qualities of the late Lord Althorp. Like him, too, he was devoid of oratorical powers; indeed, his delivery in Parliament was slow and embarrassed. Yet his good sense, his tact, his courage, his fearless honesty, combined with rank and splendid fortune, secured his

ascendancy in the Whig party. His correspondence with Burke shows his character in a very pleasing light.

The statesman whom the new Premier selected for the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer was Mr. William Dowdeswell, a country gentleman of the most upright character, and who, as a magistrate, had shown great capacity for business, and in Parliament had evinced considerable knowledge of financial affairs.

The Duke of Grafton was made one of the Secretaries of State. He possessed talents for business, and, being a graceful speaker, took the lead in the House of Lords. He was noted for a certain shyness and reserve of manner, and in public life for a weakness and indecision of character. In private life he was too much given up to field-sports, and, what was incomparably worse, to irregularities of moral conduct. He exercised, however, considerable influence over political parties.

General Conway was another of the Secretaries of State. Under the late Administration, he had, for a vote given in Parliament against General Warrants, been deprived of his regiment. Hence, for this unjust and unconstitutional act, he had taken up an attitude of great hostility to the Ministry of George Grenville. He was an able speaker.

Lord John Cavendish, a great friend of Burke's, was another member of the new Administration. Distinguished for great moral worth, whether in public or in

private life, he united with cold and reserved manners a warm and generous heart. His powers of mind were considerable, and they had been cultivated and improved by extensive reading.

Sir John Savile, though not a member of the Cabinet, was a strenuous supporter of the Rockingham Ministry. His memory must ever be revered by the Catholics of this empire. For thirteen years after the period now under review, in the year 1778, he moved and carried, in the English House of Commons, the first relaxation of the Penal Laws—a measure which, as regards the Catholics of this country, was soon afterwards adopted by the Irish Parliament. Of ancient family and ample possessions, Sir John Savile was a man of high honour and enlarged benevolence, and was at the same time distinguished for humour, eloquence, and a subtle understanding.

Such were the chief members of the party, which, though its season of power was brief, and though from the strong opposition it met with at Court, and in both Houses of Parliament, it was unable to carry out its political views, has still for us a great historical interest. Not only was it the party under whose protection the great man whose career I am tracing first appeared on the arena of public life; but it was the party whose counsels, if followed, would have, as is now positively known, conciliated America, and prevented its at least violent separation from Great Britain—would, in the great crisis of the French Revolution, have given a

better direction to the policy of the Allied Powers, and by despatching timely military aid to the Catholic army of La Vendée, have strangled that revolution in its birth, and, according to the programme of Burke, have established a temperate monarchy in its place, which would, seventy years ago, have passed Catholic Emancipation, and by a healing and enlarged policy towards Ireland, have terminated the sad misrule of ages.

Let us now turn to the public men whose policy Burke was opposed to.

Among these the first to engage our attention, is George Grenville. He was of the house of Temple, and the father of the eminent statesman who was afterwards united in office with the younger Pitt. Possessed of considerable industry and great talents for business, he was well versed in matters of finance. He had, like the Sir Watkins William Wynne of our time, the forms and precedents of the House of Commons at his fingers' ends, and would have made an excellent Speaker of that house. He spoke with clearness and ability in Parliament; but unhappily for himself and for the empire, he was called at a critical period of our history to the post of Prime Minister, for which he was but ill-qualified. Though a man of upright character and pure intentions, he was one of narrow mind and obstinate temper. A pedantic formalist, or what is vulgarly called a red-tape statesman, he was unable, when called to the head of affairs, to grapple with the

mighty problem of the time—the settlement of the troubles in America. From the great burthens entailed by the seven years' war (and a considerable item of these had been occasioned by the defence of America), George Grenville, backed by the King, resolved to lay on the colonies a duty on stamps. Against this impost the colonists strongly remonstrated. In despite of the warnings of the followers of the Marquis of Rockingham, and of the elder Pitt, the Prime Minister insisted on levying on America the obnoxious duty, and was thus the chief cause of her unhappy separation from the mother-country. The imposition of this tax, and the defence of General Warrants, were the two errors of his Administration. In 1765 he resigned the helm of affairs to the Marquis of Rockingham. From some expressions which fell from him shortly before his death, in the year 1770, it appears that had he lived, he would not have abetted the coercive policy of Lord North towards the American colonies. Yet it is certain that the section of the Whigs, of which he was the chief, did give their support to that policy.

The next figure on the political stage we encounter is a majestic one—it is the celebrated Pitt, afterwards Earl of Chatham. At the period we have now come to, he went by the name of the “Great Commoner.” His brilliant Administration during the seven years' war had endeared him to every class of Englishmen. By his counsels the army had been remodelled; a na-

tional militia called out ; the system of favouritism in the distribution of military commissions been abandoned ; and, by a master-stroke of policy, the Highlanders, hitherto the devoted adherents of the house of Stuart, been drafted into the army, where, with their English and Irish comrades, they have carried to the farthest extremities of the earth the glory of the British arms. By his counsels France was humbled by land and sea ; Canada conquered ; and a vast empire established in the far East. It was after this period the manufacturing industry of England took so wonderful a spring.

The elder Pitt was a man of stainless honour, unbending purpose, high generosity of soul, and a glowing love of country. He had great capacity for affairs, promptitude of purpose, readiness in debate, a cultivated mind, and was noted for his fitful bursts of fiery eloquence. But these high moral and intellectual qualities were marred by capriciousness of temper, and haughtiness of character and demeanour. There was something hollow, tricky, and theatrick in his behaviour ; and nothing could be more supercilious than the deportment he frequently exhibited towards his colleagues in the Cabinet, the House of Commons, and even towards the Sovereign himself. Burke, long before he entered Parliament, took the measure of Pitt. He writes to his friend, Flood : " Pitt is at his country-seat, Hayes, lying on his back, intoxicated with pride, and talking fustian." There

cannot be a more striking contrast than the Christian humility which ever characterizes the words and actions of Burke, and the arrogance pervading those of Pitt. There was a mutual repulsion between these two eminent men, which, as we shall see, manifested itself on more than one occasion. If Burke sometimes defended his principles with too great vehemence of temper, the elder Pitt not unfrequently sacrificed his principles to his temper.

The loss of America is usually laid to the charge of King George the Third, George Grenville, and Lord North; but I think I shall be able to show that the elder Pitt had his full share of responsibility in that disaster.

If Pitt was a very dubious ally of the Rockingham party, Lord North was a decided opponent. On the dissolution of the Ministry formed by Chatham, Lord North, in 1770, was called to the helm of affairs, and for twelve years directed the councils of the empire. He had received a most liberal education, was well versed in classical literature, and was acquainted with the languages of France, Italy, and even of Germany. He was remarkable for his religious feelings and moral worth, his amiable character, and the unbroken placidity of his temper, severely tried as it often was. A skilful financier, a speaker clear, argumentative, and abounding in pleasantry, he had to maintain his ground against the attacks of the greatest orators that ever sat in Parliament.

Character of Lord Shelburne



But he, too, was a minister unequal to the crisis in which his country was involved. His policy was timid, weak, and vacillating, unfit for the purpose, either of the pacification or of the subjugation of the Colonies. In compliance with the wishes of the King, he carried out measures which his better judgment disapproved; and for the last three years of his Administration, foreseeing the too probable issue of the contest in America, he retained office only at the earnest solicitation of the King. He succumbed to the general opposition of Parliament and of the nation in 1782, when the Marquis of Rockingham was again called by the Sovereign to form an administration.

This excellent nobleman dying shortly after his acceptance of office, Lord Shelburne was appointed Premier of the same Ministry.

Lord Shelburne, the first Marquis of Lansdowne, was a follower of Chatham's. He was connected with the ancient family of the Fitz Maurices of the county Kerry. His talents were considerable, and had been highly cultivated; and he was particularly conversant with foreign affairs. He cultivated literature, and was a great patron of literary and scientific men. He was a clear and able speaker, and as a debater in the House of Lords, was, in the opinion of Lord Camden, second only to the illustrious Chatham. He was noted, however, for a habit of paying on every occasion the most fulsome compliments in

society;—a habit as repugnant to good taste and good breeding, as it is dangerous to truthfulness of mind. This practice, combined with other circumstances, tended to fix on him the imputation of a certain hollowness and insincerity of character. Burke soon learned to distrust him; and, by degrees, a strong mutual repugnance grew up between the two statesmen.

He was appointed Prime Minister just at the period when the first portion of Burke's political life was brought to a close.

Before we follow the latter through the various phases of his political life, it will be well to take a prospective glance of his career, in order that you may have a key to his whole system of political thinking and course of action.

The late Lord Holland, hoping to vindicate the politics of his uncle, Fox, in 1790, by casting obloquy on the judgment of Burke, said, that "even in conversation Burke exaggerated every point he took up." And the late Lord Melbourne, a statesman of great good sense, experience, and varied acquirements, condescended on one occasion to echo this cry, and say in Parliament, that Burke was a statesman who always carried his views to the furthest extremes. Even the sensible Lord Stanhope, jealous of the reputation of his kinsman, the younger Pitt, whose timid, hesitating policy was censured in the "Letters on a Regicide Peace," declares that "those Letters

were of surpassing eloquence, but advocate a policy quite impracticable." *

Without wishing to anticipate what I shall say on this subject on another occasion, I will merely remark that Lord Macaulay, while condemning the policy of the war against revolutionary France, has the candour to affirm that the plan of warfare recommended by Burke was far more consistent and more conducive to success, than the one pursued by Pitt. To a certain extent Lord Brougham concurs in this opinion.

I will now proceed to vindicate to the best of my ability the political wisdom of Burke from these misrepresentations of party.

But I wish to premise, that though truth in politics, as in morals, lies between opposite extremes, yet is it absolute, homogeneous, uncompromising in itself; secondly, that, though absolute, it is yet in its application relative; that is to say, politics are to be adapted to the exigencies of time, place, persons, and circumstances; and lastly, that political sagacity consists in two things, to hold right principles, and to know how to apply them rightly. I need hardly add, that political sagacity, and strong sense in general, are perfectly compatible with ardent passions, and a warm, and even irritable temper. As the poet says of Julius Cæsar :—

"Of passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold."

Now, bearing these truths in mind, let us take a

* Life of Pitt, vol. ii.

rapid review of the chief occurrences in the political life of Burke.

The great questions which rose up in his time, and to which he more especially directed his powerful mind, were the disputes between British America and the mother-country, the civil disabilities of English and Irish Catholics, the Irish trade, the reform in the public economy, the abolition of the slave trade, the amelioration of the criminal code, the gross abuses in the Indian administration, and, lastly, the French Revolution, and the European war it brought on.

In the contentions between Great Britain and her American Colonies, Burke recommended *conciliation*; that is to say, the fair adjustment of mutual claims, the right of self-taxation and local self-government in the colonies, on the one hand, and the superintending power of the mother-country on the other. He deprecated rebellion against lawful authority on the one side, and all violent, coercive measures, without regard to old-established and customary rights on the other. With an oracular voice he warns America, that the armies she is raising in defence of her liberties may one day be employed for their overthrow; and he tells the English people, that the violent courses they are abetting against their colonial descendants may ere long rebound on themselves. If he asks for a concession of the American claims, yet by supporting the Declaratory Act, which maintained the right of the mother-country over the Colonies in all cases what-

foever, he no less vigorously asserts the supremacy of the British rule.

Through his long political career, he was the consistent and strenuous advocate of the religious freedom of English and Irish Catholics. Towards the Protestant Dissenters, except on one special occasion, which shall be hereafter noticed, he recommended the same course of religious toleration. But he was no less zealous in maintaining the political rights and privileges of the Anglican Establishment in England, in defending its endowments, and upholding the connexion between Church and State, whether as regards the Catholic or the Protestant countries of Europe.

In his admirable speech on Economical Reform, while he proposed the suppression of useless offices, and urged greater foresight and method in the administration of the revenue, he deprecated any retrenchment of expenditure that might be inconsistent with the due splendour of the Crown, and the dignity of the State. A wise, well-regulated economy, he showed, would insure the greater efficiency of all the public services.

In his fiscal and commercial policy towards Ireland, he sought to advance in every way the local interests of the country he so devotedly loved ; but, at the same time, he never forgot his duty to the Sovereign under whom Divine Providence had placed him, and always upheld the unity and integrity of the empire.

He warmly advocated the abolition of the African

slave trade ; but as the Government had once encouraged that odious traffic, he insisted that, at its suppression, an indemnity would be due to the West India planters, whose interests would be compromised by such a measure.

He urged an amelioration, then so sadly needed, in our criminal code ; yet never would the judicious, manly mind of Burke have countenanced that sickly, mawkish philanthropy, that, even in the case of the more atrocious crimes, calls for the abolition of capital punishment.

This great statesman, so zealous for the removal of all abuses in *administration*, resisted what is called Parliamentary Reform, or organic changes in the *Constitution*. He knew that, at the Revolution of 1688, much of the ancient power of the Crown had passed into the House of Commons, and that unless that branch of the legislature retained its ancient constitution, that is to say, unless rank, property, education, intelligence, combined with a strong infusion of the popular element, there held sway, collisions would needs ensue with the Crown and the Upper House, till Democracy would gain a triumph, soon to be followed by the frightful alternations of anarchy and of despotism.

Then, as regards the abuses in the Indian administration, while with a courage, a patience, an industry, and a sagacity unprecedented, he strove to rescue the inhabitants of that vast and remote British dependency

from misrule and oppression, and tracked proconsular tyranny through all her tortuous paths ; yet he fought not personal aggrandizement, nor even the triumph of his own party, but courted, and succeeded in obtaining, the co-operation of all parties and all members of the State.

Lastly, in the great crisis of the French Revolution, which was to fadden the close of his glorious life, he is not content with denouncing and reprobating the aberrations, moral and political, the crimes and impieties of the authors and agents of that Revolution, and with foretelling the calamities and the ruin they were to bring upon France ; but he traces with consummate skill the causes of all those errors and all those crimes. And in the event of the restoration of the legitimate Government, he strongly urges on the Emigrants of Coblenz, and on the Allied Powers, the necessity of great reforms. He insists on the regular periodical convocation of the Three Estates, the voting of all subsidies by them conjointly with the King, the abolition of all *lettres de cachet*, and other modes of arbitrary imprisonment, and the placing the public revenue out of all reach of malversation, as well as the reform of all abuses in the Church of France by the canonical authority.

Thus in all the political plans and measures, great or small, proposed or followed out by this illustrious statesman, represented by his adversaries as one of extreme, exaggerated views, we find an admirable

spirit of wisdom and of equity. Let others extol the splendour of his imagination—the fervour of his eloquence—the force of his reasoning—and the extent and variety of his learning,—I fully concur in their warmest eulogies. But what I no less insist upon, as one of the most salient qualities of his genius, is his wisdom—his deep, practical wisdom.* And observe, I say, *practical wisdom*, in contradistinction to *speculative philosophy*. “In that middle region,” admirably observes Sir James Mackintosh, “which lies between matters of practical detail and abstract speculation, the genius of Edmund Burke was at home.” And two of this great man’s warmest panegyrists, Mr. Macknight and Professor Craik, concur in representing him as possessed of little taste or liking for what are called the “Metaphysics of Government.”

It is now time to assist at his Parliamentary début.

It was on the 27th January, 1766, on the presentation of a petition from the American Congress, Burke

* This passage was written and spoken long ere I had the pleasure of seeing it confirmed by the high authority of Fox, at the time of his most vehement opposition to Burke. “When some one,” says Mr. Prior, “expressed an opinion that Burke was sometimes only a sophist, though an extraordinarily eloquent one, Mr. Fox is said to have immediately remarked that he entertained a very different opinion. ‘The eloquence of Burke,’ continued he, ‘is not the greatest of his powers: it is often a veil over his wisdom. Moderate his more vehement fallies, lower his language, withdraw his imagery, and you will find that he is more wise than eloquent—you will have your full weight of the metal, though you should melt down the chafing.’” —*Life of Burke*, pp. 483-4.

first rose to address the House of Commons. The extent of information, the force of reasoning, and the power of eloquence he displayed on this occasion, astonished the House, and surpassed the expectations of his friends. The elder Pitt rose, and congratulated the young member on his very able speech, and the Rockingham Party on the great acquisition it had made.

The Ministry introduced the "Declaratory Act," whereby the supreme authority of the mother-country over its colonies in all cases whatsoever was formally recognized. This Act was founded in truth and in justice, and was at the same time highly expedient; for without it, the English Legislature would not have agreed to the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act. "As long as there are dependencies," justly observed Mr. Burke, in another able speech, "there must be a superintending power with a right to regulate and control." But, as he proceeded to show, the exercise of that power must be regulated by circumstances. "Statesmen," says he, "when dealing with the question in which the feelings and prejudices of multitudes were concerned, ought to act with temper and judgment." Already do we see the young orator speaking with the wisdom of a Nestor!

The Declaratory Act having been passed by an overwhelming majority, the repeal of the Stamp Act was proposed in the Commons. Then, again, Burke, in reply to Grenville, defended the Ministerial measure

with uncommon talent. A large majority insured its ultimate success. Before the Session closed, Burke displayed his liberal views of commercial policy ; for at the suggestion of the mercantile body, the Ministry recommended the system of free ports. A memorial, signed by seventy-seven merchants of Lancaster, was presented to him, thanking him for the attention he had given to British commerce, and for endeavouring to extend to the Colonies the advantages of a free trade.

Such was the brilliant outset of a career destined to be so glorious. Truly might Dr. Johnson say, "that Burke had gained more reputation than perhaps any man at his first appearance had ever gained before." And as time went on, this young Irish orator was found, in the words of the *Edinburgh Review*, to equal Grenville in industry, to surpass Chatham in eloquence, and in conversational powers to be a match for Johnson himself.

In this first Session, and still more in the succeeding ones, Burke showed great readiness and vigour in reply, as well as eloquence in his set speeches. The fact, as the *Quarterly Review* once observed with great truth, that for so many years, and long before the rise of Charles James Fox, he was the acknowledged leader of Opposition in the House of Commons, disproves the assertion frequently made, that his debating powers were not very considerable.

Among many other useful measures introduced by

* Boswell's Johnson.

the Rockingham Administration, and which I have not time to enumerate, I must mention the Act of Indemnity to those Americans who had been conspicuous for their opposition to the Stamp Act. I must not pass over, too, the Requisition sent out at the same time to the American Houses of Assembly to indemnify all who had suffered in the late riots. Reforms, also, were introduced into every department of the public service. One of the most popular acts of the Ministry was the resolution they proposed against General Warrants, and which passed both Houses of Parliament.

The Rockingham Administration, though composed of men of unfulfilled honour, of the highest rank, and the largest possessions, had as yet no statesman of first-rate ability in its councils. The great man who was destined to be the soul of the party, held at this time only the subordinate position of private secretary to the Premier. To supply this deficiency in his Government, the Marquis of Rockingham repeatedly requested the elder Pitt to join his Administration. The latter, with his wonted arrogance, replied, that he could not think of connecting himself with so weak a Ministry; as if, by his talents and his following, he could not easily have infused new vigour into its body. There was scarcely a point of political principle to prevent this junction; for Pitt was opposed, like Lord Rockingham, to the adoption of coercive measures towards America, and the Rockingham party was

equally averse with himself to the dismemberment of the empire. Nothing could be more impracticable, nothing more inconsistent, nothing more unconstitutional, than Pitt's conduct at this juncture. At one moment he spoke in the strain of the most exaggerated Imperialism, declaring that America ought not, without the permission of the mother-country, to manufacture a single horse-shoe; while at another time he fanned the flames of rebellion in the colonies. He conceded to the mother-country the right of government over her dependencies, but he refused her the right of taxation in any form whatever. This distinction all the English lawyers, with the single exception of Lord Camden, repudiated as unconstitutional.

The Marquis of Rockingham sought the co-operation of the Duke of Bedford also, who was the head of another section of the Whigs. This nobleman, advanced in years and surrounded by a set of selfish, greedy adherents, demanded of the Premier conditions which he could not comply with.

The Grenvillite section of the Whigs, like that under the leadership of the Duke of Bedford, concurred with the Tories, and the remnant of Lord Bute's party, called "The King's Friends," in supporting measures of coercion against the American Colonies.

It is singular, that at this critical period of our history, — when every breeze that swept over the

Atlantic brought from the shores of the New World the mutterings of the distant thunder—the aristocracy (and an aristocracy, too, usually so sagacious) should have been so factious and so divided, and by mere personal rivalries and jealousies have distracted the councils of the empire.

The Duke of Grafton faithlessly resigned his post in the Cabinet, and this step led to the breaking up of the first Rockingham Administration.

The elder Pitt, who was called by the Sovereign to form a new Administration, contrived what Burke called a tessellated Cabinet—a Cabinet which reversed the policy the new Premier had himself long recommended, revived the Stamp Act, and thus led to the outbreak of civil war in America, and to the ultimate dismemberment of the British empire. After the formation of the Ministry, Pitt was raised to the peerage under the title of the Earl of Chatham. Some of Lord Rockingham's followers, at the recommendation of their chief, remained in office; and he also advised Burke to connect himself with the new Administration. It appears that on this occasion, as is evidenced by the Chatham correspondence, the Duke of Grafton, a member of the new Cabinet, strongly recommended him to the Prime Minister, "as the readiest man, perhaps, in the whole House, and as one on whom the thoroughest dependence may be placed, where once an obligation is owed." What a noble tribute to the talents and the public worth of a young man, who

had been but one session in Parliament! "To this letter," says Lord Stanhope, "Chatham, though he had publicly recognized Burke's great abilities, gave a cold and forbidding reply." This circumstance was truly unfortunate; for while, by the acceptance of office, Burke's principles would have undergone no change, yet he would have been enabled to render more effective services to the empire, and perhaps to avert the great disasters which ensued.

He now took the opportunity of crossing over to Ireland, and visiting there his friends and relatives. He beheld once more his excellent and beloved mother and sister, and his old school-fellow, Richard Shackleton, and his Catholic cousin, Garrett Nagle, whom he described as the most perfect man he had ever known. He was entertained with the warmest hospitality by the gentry of Galway, and the Corporation presented him with the freedom of the city in a silver box.

He returned to England, and at the opening of Parliament in the following year, resisted the motion made by a member to prohibit the importation of Irish wool into England. In consequence of his able speech, the motion was rejected by a considerable majority; and, as a token of gratitude for his services, the freedom of his native city was transmitted to him by the Mayor of Dublin.

The illness of Chatham weakened his motley Administration; and it was further disorganized by the

death of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Charles Townsend.*

Lord North was now called to the helm of affairs, in 1770. The character of that nobleman, and the policy he pursued for twelve years, have been described.

In the year 1772, Mr. Fox presented a petition from a certain number of Anglican clergymen, of whom Archdeacon Balguy was the chief, praying to be relieved from subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. He shortly afterwards introduced into Parliament a Bill to that effect. Mr. Burke, with great energy, opposed the motion of his friend, and in this opposition he was backed by all the Tories, and a number of Whigs. He showed that no church could exist without formularies, without a liturgy, and without a teaching body. "Those clergymen," he says, "who will not submit to the doctrines and discipline of the Established Church, may leave it, and found dissenting congregations." Here Burke speaks like a High-Churchman, and holds the Catholic doctrine of ecclesiastical authority, but misapplies it to his own sect. All the Protestant sects, even the most fanatical, that began with proclaiming the principle of private judgment, were obliged, in self-defence, and to prevent themselves from falling into utter annihilation, to establish some kind of authority. Thus the thing repudiated in theory was adopted, and of necessity adopted, in practice.

* He died in 1769.

In this speech is the celebrated passage on the inadequacy of the sacred Scriptures, from their inherent difficulties, their multifarious contents, their diversity of origin, nature, and scope, to be the sole rule of Faith. It was no wonder that Dr. Theophilus Lindsey, who had long entertained doubts as to our Lord's Divinity, and was one of the Anglican clergymen anxious to be freed from subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, wrote to his Unitarian friend, Dr. Priestley, that Burke's speech was "full of Popish ideas, and entirely like a Jesuit's." Warmly cheered by the Tories, Burke was on this occasion in opposition, not only to Fox, but to some of his Rockingham friends, to whom the subject was new. The petition of the clergymen was rejected by 217 voices against 71.

On the 3rd April of the same year, a motion was introduced to relieve Dissenting Ministers from subscribing to certain doctrines which the Toleration Act required them to sign. Observe, this was a motion to give to Dissenters the full benefit of religious toleration, and not, like the preceding one, to disturb the internal economy of the Anglican Church. Burke, with his characteristic wisdom, supported the cause of the petitioners, and in this support was joined not only by the Whigs, but by some of the Ministers, and a portion of their Tory adherents. In a Catholic country, where there is a variety of religions, the most religious Catholic statesman would, in the two

cases, have precisely followed the same course as Burke. But the Unitarians, in their folly, railed at what they called his inconsistency.

The Bill was carried through the Commons, but was unfortunately lost in the Upper House.

On the 7th April of the same year, 1772, Mr. Fox introduced a Bill to repeal the Marriage Act of 1753, which rendered the marriages of minors, without the consent of parents, unlawful. On this most important measure, Burke again felt himself compelled to differ from his young and brilliant friend. He spoke as might be expected of a man of his great sense and virtue. He displayed not only his wonted political sagacity, but an ethical wisdom not surpassed in the pages of Johnson himself. On this occasion, I may venture to observe, that moral gravity forms an essential part of high statesmanship. "The fear of the Lord," saith the Scripture, "is the beginning of wisdom;" and loose, profligate livers, like Fox and Sheridan, had they even possessed the political genius, could never have attained to the strong sense of Burke. The influence of an upright will in developing the mental powers, is a phenomenon which, I think, has not been sufficiently attended to.

Burke differed again from his friend Fox on the important subject of Parliamentary Reform. The reasons which dictated his conduct on that great question of constitutional policy shall afterwards be stated. But

we here already discern the germs of deep dissensions between the two political friends.

At the beginning of 1773, Burke went over to France, in order to place his son Richard in some establishment where he might gain a proficiency in the French language. A suitable place he found in the city of Auxerre, and there settled his own son, as well as Dr. King's, under the superintendence of the Bishop of the diocese. During his stay there, he passed his evenings at the Bishop's palace, where he met ecclesiastics of various grades, and the nobility of the neighbourhood. There his inquisitive mind gathered full information respecting the moral conduct and intellectual attainments of the priesthood and the nobles of France. These inquiries he continued to prosecute at Paris, where he remained a month. He visited most of the public institutions of that capital, including the Irish Catholic College. He supped frequently at the Marchioness Du Deffant's, who, though blind, and at the advanced age of eighty and upwards, was, by her wit, her literary acquirements, and the grace and vivacity of her manners, one of the idols of Parisian society. In her salons, Burke first came in contact with the profligate and impious Literati, who were then in the zenith of their power. He stood up zealously for the cause of Revelation, which they so audaciously impugned; and, in despite of his bad French pronunciation, he made such an impression on these infidels, that even Horace Walpole was obliged, half ironically,

to confess that Burke had made as many converts as S. Patrick.

He attended the levée at Versailles, and was presented to the old King, Louis XV., and to the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XVI., whose countenance reflected the warm benevolence of his soul. There, too, he first beheld that vision of surpassing loveliness, the Dauphiness, Marie Antoinette, then in the full bloom of bridal grace and beauty—her brow yet undarkened by the cloud of sorrow—her eye still beaming with youthful hope and joy. She was gay, because she was innocent ; she was unsuspecting, because she was pure ; and, remembering the natural, patriarchal simplicity of her native court, she could ill brook the rigid etiquette of Versailles. The Dauphiness then little thought that the stranger presented to her would one day transfer her image to the glowing canvas of his immortal page, and thus awaken for her sorrows the undying sympathy of all time.

During his abode in Paris, Burke learned indirectly, from an official source, a fact of historical interest. It appears that the scandalous partition of Poland, an event which was the worthy prelude to all those infractions of treaties ; to those violations of public law ; to that utter contempt for the rights, liberties, independence, and even existence of nations, which have characterized the Revolutionary Party up to this hour : this scandalous partition, I say, might have been prevented, had the British Government on this

occasion acted with the French. It appears that the latter would have been willing to join in an energetic protest addressed to the three allied powers against this act of violence. But the calamitous quarrel with America engrossed, to the exclusion of every other matter, the attention of the British Ministry.

On his return to England in March, 1773, Burke did not fail, both in "The Annual Register" and in Parliament, to call public attention to the alarming state of Europe. He pointed with one hand to the atrocious dismemberment of Poland, and with the other, to the active irreligious propagandism, that was fast gathering the French people within its destructive toils. Thus he showed, that both in her external relations, and in her inward life, Europe was menaced with the most formidable dangers. So the great social tempest, that twenty years afterwards burst over the nations, did not, as is sometimes foolishly pretended, take our great political pilot by surprise. "Under the systematic attacks of atheism" (these were his ominous words in 1773,) "I see some of the props of good government already begin to fail. I see propagated principles which will not leave to religion even a toleration, and make virtue herself less than a name."*

* Speech on the Protestant Dissenters' Relief Bill, March, 1773.

SECOND LECTURE.



THE Government, under Lord North, having levied a duty of threepence on the pound of tea in the American ports, great excitement arose in the colonies, and especially in Boston.. There the captains of merchantmen had not been allowed to land the chests of tea. The enraged inhabitants threw the tea-chests into the sea, under the very guns of the British frigate. The Government, in retaliation for this insult, shut up the port of Boston ; but the colonists of the other provinces made common cause with the Bostonians, and resolved to assemble a congress, in order to concert such measures as the crisis demanded.

After the passing of the Boston Port Bill, Mr. Rose Fuller, the member for Rye, made a motion that the House of Commons, in order to soften the effects of that severe measure, should take into consideration the impost of the threepence in the pound on tea imported into the colonies. The motion was made on the 19th April, 1774. A supporter of Lord North's Government having ascribed the disturbances in the American colonies to the repeal of the Stamp Act, and for this measure having severely censured the Rockingham Ministry, Mr. Burke rose to reply. Then

he delivered one of the most magnificent harangues ever heard within the walls of Parliament. I cannot do better than cite the summary given of it by his recent able biographer, Mr. Macknight. "The orator detailed," says he, "the circumstances in which taxation by the British Legislature had arisen; the evils which the Stamp Act had produced; the good which immediately followed the repeal; the difficulties of Lord Rockingham's Ministry; the revival of the policy of taxation by Chatham's mosaic government; the mischievous consequences which this renewed right of imperial taxation had caused; the utter inefficiency of the solitary tea-duty as a financial resource; the magnitude of the interests jeopardized by continuing it; and the awful position in which colonial affairs stood, when every remedy appeared only to aggravate the disorder, and the breach between the mother-country and her dependencies in the New World was widening every day."

In this speech occurs that passage—one of the most beautiful in our literature—when, alluding to the partial retirement of Lord Chatham from the Cabinet, and the more prominent position taken up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, he says: "Even while this glorious orb (Chatham) was illumining the western heavens with his descending glories, another luminary (Townshend) arose in the opposite quarter of the horizon, and for his hour became lord of the ascendant; but that light, too, hath now departed."

This speech, censuring a policy supported by a large majority of the House, was listened to with breathless attention, and elicited unanimous applause from the crowded benches on each side. When the orator expressed a fear he might be tiring the patience of the House, cries of "Go on, go on!" resounded from all sides, till at last, at the close of three hours, he concluded his magnificent oration. Amid the murmurs of applause which followed, members were heard whispering to each other, "This is the most extraordinary man we ever heard!" This speech, which was the first Burke had been induced to publish, "became," as Dr. Johnson said, "the talk of the town."

The shutting up of the port of Boston had induced the other colonies to pass resolutions neither to export to nor to import from Great Britain. These colonial resolutions led to retaliatory acts on the part of the British Government; for the New England States were forbidden to trade not only with Great Britain and Ireland, but even with the West Indies, and were excluded from the fisheries of Newfoundland. These measures, which were calculated to inflict extreme misery on so many families, were adverse to the interests of both parties alike engaged in the dispute. The excitement in America grew every day more alarming, and portended the outbreak of a civil war. Chatham and Burke both proposed plans of conciliation; but whoever will examine with impartiality the two schemes, will not, I think, hesitate in awarding

the preference to the project of the latter statesman. Lord North, alarmed at the dangerous ferment of minds in these transatlantic provinces, thought it time to bring forward his plan for conciliating America. He moved "that if any of the colonies, through their General Assemblies, might propose to contribute to the common defence and to the expenses of their government, in such proportions as the King and Parliament could approve, the right of taxation should, in these particular provinces, be suspended."

This was a step in the right direction; yet it was but a half measure. By reserving to the Crown and the Imperial Parliament the right of approving the amount of colonial taxation, this plan left the very subject in dispute unsettled.

It was now the turn of the Rockingham party to bring forward their scheme of colonial pacification. Burke being intrusted by his political friends with this task, then delivered his celebrated speech on the "Conciliation of America."

He began by showing that, whatever the merits of Lord North's Bill might be, his lordship yet admitted the principle of conciliation. He next goes on to show that the exports to America then equalled the whole commerce of England at the commencement of the eighteenth century; and then, by a sublime apostrophe, he introduces the angel of Lord Bathurst, a man ninety years of age, foretelling to him in vision, when he was a child of ten, America, then covered over with

primeval forests, and inhabited almost entirely by savages, but soon to be fertilized, enriched, and adorned with all the arts of civilized life, with flourishing plantations, a thriving commerce, and populous cities. He shows that, from the very descent of their colonists, the republican spirit of their religion, their fondness for law-works, their possession of slaves, and their remote distance from the mother-country, a spirit of turbulent and refractory freedom had sprung up among them. Then, putting aside the abstract question of the imperial right of taxation, which he never formally denies, he proves from various historical precedents, how the discontents of America may best be allayed. The only safe and practicable mode for the mother-country to raise a revenue out of her colonies was, as he shows, through the medium of their local legislatures. He concludes with thirteen pacific resolutions, including the repeal of Charles Townshend's Revenue Act, and the abrogation of the penal enactments of the preceding session. He closes this great speech amid the universal applause of the House, and resumes his seat.

On the 11th February, 1780, Burke introduced his motion for economical reforms in the Civil List. In his scheme he combined at once a spirit of prudent economy, and a laudable desire for retrenchment of useless offices, with a scrupulous regard for vested interests, and a patriotic resolve to uphold the dignity of the Crown. It were too long to enter upon an enumeration of the various boards he pro-

posed to reform or to suppress. In the British Monarchy there are five separate sovereign jurisdictions, the Principality of Wales, the Duchy of Lancaster, the County Palatine and Earldom of Chester, and the Duchy of Cornwall. But in all these there were once separate establishments, onerous to the nation, and productive of no advantage to the Crown. Burke proposed that pensions should not be abolished in the life-time of their possessors; nor where they had become the matter of family settlements; and that while all useless boards should be extinguished, the emoluments of active service should be augmented rather than diminished. He was quite unwilling that by a false economy the efficiency of the public services, or the dignity and splendour of the Crown should be obscured or impaired. In such establishments as it was expedient to retain, he pointed out the abuses that were to be removed, and the mode of their reform. But Burke, I think, went too far in proposing the abolition of the hereditary revenues of the Crown. These revenues, reduced as they had been since the Revolution of 1688, were the last remnants of those ancient bulwarks that served to guard the Royal prerogative. The sale of the Crown lands at the Revolution of 1688, can be scarcely more justified, than the confiscation of so much of the Church property, which occurred at the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Those landed endowments were alike necessary to secure the political independence of

those two great corporations—the Church and the Crown—on which the welfare of society mainly depends. And the sale of the Royal domains, accompanied as it was with other encroachments on regal authority, was, in my humble opinion, the chief defect (as regards England at least), in a Revolution that, in many respects, consolidated and strengthened the political constitution. This excessive limitation of Royal power naturally gave to the aristocracy an undue preponderance, which was calculated in course of time to provoke a dangerous popular reaction.

But it is not by any wild, democratic changes, but by the revival of Catholic faith and Catholic feeling, that harmony can alone be re-established in the British Constitution, as in the British mind itself.

Burke had a singular art for rendering the driest subject attractive. What could at first sight be more uninteresting than a motion for economical reforms, for the suppression of useless offices, sinecure pensions, and obsolete establishments? Yet for the play of wit and pleasantry, for pointed sarcasm, for historical research, for lively descriptions, as well as for an admirable arrangement of the most various and complex matter, and for statesmanlike sagacity, this speech is allowed to be one of the greatest efforts of the author's genius. The historian Gibbon, who was one of those whose interests would have suffered by the proposed reforms, thus speaks in his "Memoirs:"—"Never can I forget the delight with which that diffusive and

ingenious orator, Mr. Burke, was heard, and even by those whose existence he proscribed.* “That speech,” said the Prime Minister, Lord North, “is one of the ablest I have ever heard; and it is one which, though I have had the happiness of knowing many men of very brilliant talents, I believe the honourable gentleman only could have made.” Still more emphatic was the eulogium pronounced by the eminent lawyer, Dunning.† This scheme of economical reform, though it contained many useful clauses, had others, which, I think, too much interfered with the domestic arrangements of the palace. Such, for example, was the proposal to contract by the head for the Royal tables.

The Bill was, on the chief clause—that for abolishing the office of the Treasurer of the Chamber—rejected by a majority of fifty-three. The numbers were, for the motion, one hundred and fifty-eight, and two hundred and eleven against it.

Burke, seeing so important an article of his plan of economy rejected, became indifferent as to the fate of his Bill. But as the party of Lord Shelburne was then on good terms with that of Lord Rockingham,

* Gibbon’s *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. 1. p. 156.

† A recent historian, Mr. Masséy, thus characterizes this great oration: “The whole speech,” says he, “though multifarious in its topics, is a model of lucid statement and apt reasoning. And though the theme is unpromising, the speech is the most brilliant and entertaining of all the great orations of the same master which have come down to us in a collected form.”—*Hist. of England under George III.*, vol. ii., p. 338.

Dunning, a partisan of the former nobleman, undertook the task of bringing forward, in the following session, many portions of Burke's Economical Bill. He accordingly, in an able speech, proposed the celebrated Resolution, "that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." In a crowded House this Resolution was carried by a majority of thirteen votes. Other resolutions, developing the above proposition, met with equal success on the same evening.

The Ministry were extremely embarrassed by the successive victories of the Opposition. Lord North declared, that a motion embracing such a variety of objects, and many of so delicate a nature, required time for consideration. He succeeded in postponing for some weeks the second reading of the Bill. The illness then of the Speaker caused a further delay in the discussion of the question.

But what contributed to the failure of Burke's scheme of economical reform, far more than the stratagems of the Ministry, were the wild, dangerous projects of several members of his own party; and to which I shall later have occasion to revert.

He had now attained the acmé of popularity, and his influence in the House of Commons was constantly in the ascendant. We have heard the panegyrics pronounced on him by political opponents. And, indeed, when we consider the extraordinary impression which his great speeches made on the House of Commons,

how absurd is the notion not uncommonly entertained, that he was the dinner-bell of that House, and the signal for the departure of Members! The fact is, that on important occasions no other orator, not Chatham, not Fox, not the younger Pitt, commanded such breathless attention. It is true that, after the period under review, and when parties in England had become extremely exasperated, Burke was sometimes exposed to indecent interruptions from the junior members, and, in consequence, sometimes lost his temper, and with it, somewhat of his influence in the House. And although the defects of his delivery have been exaggerated, yet it is on all hands admitted that his action was ungraceful, and his voice neither melodious, nor flexible in its modulations. An old Irish Priest, a very accomplished gentleman, whom, long ago, I had the pleasure of being acquainted with in London, sometimes imitated Burke's mode of delivery, for in his youth he had heard him in the House of Commons; and, judging from these imitations, I should say, that this orator's style of elocution, though heavy, and somewhat monotonous, was yet earnest and impressive. The celebrated actress, Mrs. Siddons, whom all must admit to be a most competent judge in the matter of delivery, says that in Burke's opening speech on the Impeachment of Warren Hastings, at which she was present, the manner of the orator was most impressive, and his voice most sonorous. And Fox, in one of his last speeches on the

slave trade, after citing a memorable passage of Burke's on that odious traffic, recalls the very earnest and impressive accents in which it was delivered.

The first relaxation of the penal laws against English Catholics was made in 1778. The Bill was introduced by Sir George Savile, and seconded by the distinguished orator Dunning. It passed through both Houses of Parliament with scarcely a dissentient voice, and immediately received the Royal signature. This first Act relieved English Catholics from the most oppressive of the penal laws. It granted them the open exercise of their religion, and the right to hold schools, together with the right of inheriting and devising landed property.

Another Bill was introduced by Lord Richard Cavendish, and who, like Sir George Savile, was a member of the Rockingham party, to repeal a law passed in the reign of William III., whereby Catholics were disabled from acquiring any interest in the forfeited lands. This Bill, which had more especial reference to Ireland, passed also into law. While these two Bills were in progress through Parliament, Burke sent copies of them to his Irish friends.

In the Irish Parliament, a Bill similar to the one in favour of English Catholics, but not quite so liberal, passed through both Houses of the Legislature.

The repeal of the Test Act was inserted in the Irish Bill; and when this was sent over to England for the Royal confirmation, some exceptions were taken

by the English Ministers. Fearing for the fate of the Bill, Burke immediately rode up from Beaconsfield to London, and had interviews, first with the Attorney and the Solicitor Generals, and afterwards, with the Lord Chancellor Thurlow, and the Prime Minister, Lord North. In a long discussion, he endeavoured to answer the objections, and to allay the fears of Ministers in respect to the Test Act. In a second interview with the Chancellor and the Prime Minister, Burke produced a very important letter he had received from his friend, Mr. Edmund Perry, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, and who had deservedly great weight in the Irish Legislature. This letter, pointing out the great danger of a rejection of the Bill, made the deepest impression on the Prime Minister and the Chancellor.

At the same time the petition on behalf of Irish Catholics, which I spoke of in the last lecture, and which, composed by Burke in 1764, was left by him when he quitted Ireland with Mr. John Curry, was now, by that gentleman, laid before the Lord Lieutenant. The latter transmitted it to King George III. His Majesty read it with deep attention and interest. All objections to the Bill were waived by the Ministry, and the Royal signature was affixed to it. Thus was the first instalment of justice paid to the long-suffering Catholics of these kingdoms; and we now know the individual who had a great share in that act of reparation.

In Scotland, where Calvinism had retained all its pristine vigour, the recent measure of relief to English and Irish Catholics called forth the first clamours of bigotry. The pulpit and the press teemed with invectives against the Catholic Church, and with denunciations and threats against her scanty but devoted followers. The frenzy spread from Edinburgh to Glasgow, and other provincial cities; and owing to the culpable apathy of the magistrates in many places, the houses of Catholics and of liberal Protestants were attacked and pillaged by the mob. The Protestant Association of Edinburgh, composed, for the greater part, of the most ignorant and obscure fanatics, fought by wicked publications to light up the flames of religious bigotry in England. The Scotch Catholics invoked the intervention of the British Parliament against the outrages committed by their countrymen, expressing, at the same time, a desire that the promised boon of fuller relief might be postponed.

Burke, with his wonted zeal and ability, brought forward their petition in the House of Commons, and took occasion to blame the supineness of the Government. Lord North, by command of His Majesty, directed the attention of the Commons to this petition, and declared that its prayer should be attended to. But had the excesses of the Scottish sectarians been at the outset repressed, the English metropolis would not have been disgraced and convulsed by such

an exhibition of folly and fanaticism as the following year beheld.

Lord George Gordon, half knave, half madman, had by the most incendiary speeches (little heeded though they were by the House of Commons, to which they were addressed), excited the evil passions of the lower orders. He was at the head of a so-called Protestant Association, whose object it was to intimidate Government and the Parliament into a repeal of the recent Act of Religious Toleration. In Parliament, he announced his intention of presenting, on the 3rd day of June, 1780, a petition to that effect; and, out of doors, he told his infatuated followers, that unless twenty thousand men accompanied him to Westminster, he would not lay the petition on the table of the House of Commons. His summons was too faithfully obeyed. A large mob, consisting of the lowest and most disorderly portion of the community, thronged the avenues to Parliament. The Protestant Bishops, the Peers, the Ministers, the leading Members of the House of Commons, all who had served the cause of religious toleration, were insulted, assailed, and grossly outraged. The lives of several were exposed to imminent danger. Lord George Gordon stimulated the fanaticism of the populace, who had penetrated into the lobbies, and denounced by name the opponents of the petition. The illustrious subject of this biography was specially marked out for popular odium. At length the Royal Guards came down, and cleared the lobbies of the

Houfe. The wretched petition found no more than feven members to fupport it.

As foon as the two Houfes had adjourned, the populace commenced the work of riot and deftruction. Several Catholic Chapels were pillaged and burned ; the facred veffels and ornaments profaned ; and the clergy forced to feek fafety in flight. Newgate was burned to the ground ; other prifons were broken open, and their inmates fet free. The houfes of the eminent public men who had fignalized their zeal in the caufe of religious freedom—like Sir George Savile, Lord Mansfield, and others—were gutted, and the valuable furniture, papers, pictures, and library of the laft-named nobleman, wantonly deftroyed. Burke, hearing that his own houfe was marked out for deftruction, haftened to fecure his papers, and fhortly afterwards, a file of foldiers was fent to guard it from the attacks of the populace. His friends urged him to leave town, but as he deemed it his duty to remain, he refifted their entreaties. Himfelf and Mrs. Burke found a refuge in the houfe of their friend, General Burgoyne. Mrs. Burke feconded her husband in the courageous difcharge of his public duties, and, on this trying occafion, evinced fignal fortitude. Burke rafhly expofed himfelf to unneceffary danger, for, on his way to Parliament, he walked through the crowd publicly avowing his fentiments, and even announcing his name. His extraordinary boldnefs awed the rioters : he paffed unfcathed through

the crowd, and, strange to say, found even sympathizers among these fanatics.

Meantime the work of havoc rapidly proceeded. Twice was the Bank attacked by an infuriated mob, and the Pay-office attempted. Thirty-six fires blazed in one night from different quarters of the city, and the metropolis seemed handed over to the mercy of a lawless rabble. At length the troops came pouring in from all parts of the country into town, and the Ministry, which for nearly a week seemed paralyzed, hastily summoned the Privy Council. Burke's great friend and patron, the Marquis of Rockingham, repaired unbidden to the council-board, and there, in the presence of the King, upbraided Lord North and his colleagues for their culpable supineness. The Ministers doubting whether an order could be given to the troops to act without the attendance of the civil magistrate, and the formal expiration of an hour after the reading of the Riot Act, the King consulted Wedderburne, the Attorney-General, on the matter. The latter replied that, in the present emergency, such an order would be perfectly legal. Thereupon the King took the responsibility upon himself, signed a warrant to the military commanders for the immediate suppression of the riot, and thus saved his capital from destruction. In less than six hours order was restored in London. About six hundred of the rioters had fallen in the conflict with the military.

Burke, after having demanded in Parliament a vigo-

rous repression of these disorders, now pleaded the cause of mercy. He suggested that six capital executions, one in each quarter of the city, would be enough to satisfy the ends of justice. His humane intervention, doubtless, saved many lives; yet, twenty-four of the more guilty disturbers of the public peace expiated their crime on the gallows.

But what shall I say of the exemplary conduct displayed by the Irish Catholics of the British metropolis at this awful crisis, when their lives and property had been assailed, and their religious feelings been so cruelly outraged? Their conduct shall be described in Mr. Burke's own eloquent words:—

“I suppose,” says he, in his famous speech to the electors of Bristol, “there are not in London less than four or five thousand of the Roman Catholic persuasion from my country, who do a great deal of the most laborious works in the metropolis; and they chiefly inhabit those quarters which were the principal theatre of the fury of the bigoted multitude. They are known to be men of strong arms and quick feelings, and more remarkable for a determined resolution than for clear ideas and much foresight. But though provoked by everything that can stir the blood of men, their houses and Chapels in flames, and with the most atrocious profanations of everything they hold sacred before their eyes, not a hand was moved to retaliate, or even to defend. Had a conflict once begun, the rage of their persecutors would have redou-

bled. Thus, fury increasing by the reverberation of outrages, house being fired for house, and church for chapel, I am convinced that no power under heaven could have prevented a general conflagration, and at this day London would have been a tale. But I am well informed (and the thing speaks it) that the clergy exerted their whole influence to keep their people in such a state of forbearance and quiet as, when I look back, fills me with astonishment, but not with astonishment only. Their merits on that occasion ought not to be forgotten ; nor will they, when Englishmen come to recollect themselves."

The celebrated speech from which this passage has been extracted was delivered at Bristol after the dissolution of Parliament in the autumn of 1780. To that city he had repaired in order to meet his constituents, and give them a full explanation of his conduct on certain important questions of public policy. To four matters, on which he differed from many of the electors of Bristol, he specially addressed himself. The four charges which many of his constituents brought against him were—that he did not more frequently visit their city ; that he had supported Lord Beauchamp's Insolvent Debtors' Bill ; the Irish Trade Acts ; and the relief granted to the Catholics of England and Ireland. On all these subjects he fully vindicated his public conduct, and triumphantly refuted accusations, many of them as frivolous as they were unjust.

I know not what qualities most to admire in that

noble speech—whether the bold, manly tone of independence that pervades it, or the generous views put forth on religious toleration, or the luminous principles of statesmanship, or the force of the reasoning, and the easy dignity of the style.

In this election Burke, though supported by the most respectable merchants of Bristol, was defeated. It was especially his views on the Irish trade, and his advocacy of the Catholic claims, that excited the religious bigotry and the commercial jealousy of the lower class of the electors, and led to this disaster.

After his defeat at Bristol, he hastened to assist his friend, Mr. Fox, in his canvass for the suffrages of the electors of Westminster. Having witnessed the triumphant return of his colleague to Parliament, he retired to his country-house at Beaconsfield, in Buckinghamshire. His faithful friend, the Marquis of Rockingham, now tendered to him the borough of Malton, where he was to find a refuge against popular inconsistency. This enlightened nobleman would not suffer a great statesman, because he had sought to establish free trade between England and Ireland, to rescue the debtor from the oppression of his creditors, and to loosen the bonds of his Catholic fellow-countrymen, to be shut out from the councils of the empire.*

* This fact has, with many others of a like kind, been often adduced to prove the utility of close boroughs, in order to protect distinguished statesmen from the effects of popular ignorance or caprice ; or to introduce into public life young men of great parts, though devoid of the advantages of rank and fortune.



Burke now drew up a wise scheme for the abolition of the slave trade, and the gradual enfranchisement of the negro slaves in our colonies. In this plan he allotted due compensation to the planter, who had been encouraged by British laws to invest his capital in the purchase of West India property. I regret that I have not space to enter into the details of this judicious as well as benevolent plan.

Let me now say a few words on Burke's two great contemporaries and rivals, Charles James Fox and the younger Pitt.

Charles James Fox, a younger son of the first Lord Holland, was born in London in 1749. As a boy he was spoiled by excessive indulgence, and then, as he grew up, was early initiated by his worthless father in the follies and vices of the circle in which he moved. Before he had reached the age of twenty-one, he had already squandered immense sums in dissipation and in gaming.

Neglected as his moral training had been, his intellectual faculties had been assiduously cultivated. He was first sent to Eton, and then completed his studies at the University of Oxford. Here he evinced a strong love for the mathematics, and laid the foundation of that classical learning for which he was so distinguished in after-life. He prepared himself for public life by a diligent study of the great writers of antiquity and of his own country. He became in course of time a first-rate classical scholar, and acquired also (what was rare

in those times) considerable proficiency in French and Italian literature.

Entering Parliament before he had reached the age of twenty, he passed his time alternately between the political agitation of the House of Commons, and the excitement of the turf and of the gaming-table.

Whether in office or in Opposition, Fox was an orator of the first order. His speeches were remarkable for closeness and vigour of reasoning, playfulness of wit, felicity of classical allusion, vehemence of declamation, as well as a very pure, idiomatic diction. He took part in almost every debate, and was eminently happy in his replies. Even when our judgment most disapproves of his policy, the English Demosthenes carries us away by the irresistible torrent of his eloquence. Defects of voice, and of gesture, and of mien, were forgotten by the spectators in the wonderful skill and dexterity of his reasoning, and in the impetuous rush of his declamation. Hesitating for words at the outset of his speech, he by degrees grew warm with his subject, and then poured down on the adverse ranks a tremendous volley of argument, sarcasm, wit, declamation, and invective.

For many years Fox was the colleague of Burke, from whom, as he declared on a memorable occasion, he had derived more political knowledge than from all other men and all books put together. Differing so utterly in their moral habits, the intimacy of the two statesmen was confined chiefly to the sphere of political

life. And even here, I pointed out on a former occasion the great divergence of their views, as shown on the Marriage Bill, the subscription of the clergymen of the Established Church to the Thirty-nine Articles, and especially on the important measure of Parliamentary Reform. And when the great political problems involved in the French Revolution came under consideration, that discrepancy of opinion culminated in the strongest, most irreconcilable antagonism.

Though Fox came into Parliament some years after Burke, and was considerably his junior, still his family connexions gave him certain advantages over his illustrious friend. With the tacit consent of the latter, he assumed by degrees the leadership of the Whig party. Unfounded as I showed the statement to be, that Burke did not excel as a ready debater, yet in that capacity the powers of Fox were unrivalled; and, as a leader, too, in the House of Commons, he possessed superior tact, and command of temper.

Fox was the idol of his social circle, and the oracle of the clubs. And, strange to say, profligacy and gaming, which harden the hearts of other men, had not been able utterly to mar a nature so happily constituted. His feelings were warm, his benevolence was large, and his temper frank and engaging. Burke, who knew the great faults of his friend, never failed to do justice to the good qualities of his heart. Later in life, Fox reformed his conduct; and his seat at S. Anne's, near Windsor, then presented a charming

picture of domestic happiness and of mental refinement.

Let us now turn to his great rival—the younger Pitt.

William Pitt, the second son of the great Lord Chatham, was born in 1759. The father, who bestowed the greatest care on the education of his son, was wont to say, that his little William would one day tread in his footsteps. He used frequently to make him, when a boy, stand on a table, and read off into English a page from some Latin or Greek author. To this practice Pitt attributed that wonderful command of language which he possessed in after-life. Under the care of his tutor, Dr. Tomline, he repaired to Cambridge, and advanced so rapidly in his classical studies, that, at fifteen years of age, his proficiency was as great as that of most University students at twenty-one. After practising a short time at the Bar, he entered Parliament, and there began his wonderful political career. At twenty-one years of age he was made Chancellor of the Exchequer; and at twenty-four he was constituted Prime Minister; and so on those young shoulders was laid the chief burthen of one of the mightiest empires in the world. At the most critical period of our history, we shall see him holding simultaneously the high offices of Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and First Lord of the Treasury—three offices which, even in ordinary times, are each sufficient to task the energies of the most able statesmen.

The eloquence of the younger Pitt was like a piece of the most melodious music, where not a false note was to be detected. Every word was aptly chosen, and in the fitting place; and for hours together he would pour out, without preparation, and without the slightest hesitation, his sonorous and stately periods. Showing ever a consummate knowledge of affairs, he stated the most complicated transactions with remarkable clearness and precision; and marshalled and pressed his arguments with admirable skill. A great master of irony, he used that weapon, when the occasion required it, with singular effect. In wit and brilliancy of fancy, his speeches yield to those of his disciple, Mr. Canning; but they surpass the latter in weight of argument, and in solidity of observation. And herein, also, was his superiority to his father. The latter, indeed, had fitful bursts of impassioned eloquence, as well as greater energy of character. Had he, for example, been, like his son, engaged in the war against the French Revolution, he would in all probability have conducted it with a more concentrated vigour. And again, in Irish affairs, and on the momentous question of Catholic Emancipation, he would, I think, have assumed an attitude of greater boldness and independence towards the Crown, as well as towards his own party. On the other hand, Chatham had not, on the whole, the political sagacity of his son, nor his well drawn out train of argument, nor his equable, majestic flow of eloquence. A

French emigrant Bishop who had had a long conference with Mr. Pitt on French affairs, said, on leaving the Minister, "What immense sense has Mr. Pitt!" Such is really the impression which his speeches leave on the mind.

To these intellectual gifts the younger Pitt united the charms of a most pleasing countenance, a dignified form, and a voice of singular melody and compass. And when he rose to speak, his five hundred and fifty followers in the House of Commons hung intently on his words, watching his every gesture, and his every shade of countenance, and inspiring him with hearty cheers as he went on. If the eloquence of Fox was a bubbling, foaming, impetuous torrent, that of Pitt was, surely, a placid, silvery tide.

Like many of my countrymen, Pitt retained, under a reserved and somewhat cold exterior, a warm, affectionate heart. Obligated, at that age when the emotions are so fresh and so expansive, to assume the gravity of official reserve; and again, later on, thwarted in his tenderest affections, and with his feelings, as it were, thrown back upon themselves; the younger Pitt showed a coldness of manner that was not in keeping with his natural disposition. The late Mr. Charles Butler told me, he thought he possessed a warmer, more genial nature than Canning. And how pleasing is the picture his niece, Lady Hester Stanhope, has drawn of the domestic circle, where, amid his friends and relatives, he evinced a charming

gaiety, and a most loving heart. He was the idol of a select, but contracted circle of friends. How beautiful were his letters to his mother! How touching the secret tears he shed in the House of Commons, when that House pronounced a sentence of condemnation on his old friend, Dundas!

Though, in his long and brilliant administration, he had lavished wealth, and honours, and coronets on others, he remained comparatively poor himself; and it was with difficulty King George III. could induce him to accept the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports, which gave an income of five thousand pounds a year. It is much to be regretted, that a life so correct in private, marked in public by so many natural virtues, by such disinterestedness, such magnanimity, such patriotic self-devotion, should not have been hallowed by prayer. On his death-bed, Pitt regretted, that in the pressure of business, and the hurry of life, he had neglected prayer; and it was only at the urgent persuasion of the Protestant bishop, who attended him in his last illness, he received the Communion according to the rite of his Church.

I have now briefly portrayed the two great rival orators, whom Burke himself characterised as the two most eloquent men that ever sat in Parliament. Yet when we turn from their speeches to his own, what a great superiority do we find in him! In vain we look to Pitt or to Fox for that splendour of imagery, the "*lumina orationis*," which Cicero speaks of—for that

copiousness of illustration—that variety of knowledge, that depth of observation, which distinguish the great Irish orator and writer. Well might the *Quarterly Review* say some time ago, “Pitt and Fox were great, but Burke belongs to another order of beings, and ranks with the Shakespeares, the Bacons, and the Newtons. He was,” continues the Reviewer, “what he called Charles Townshend, ‘a prodigy,’ and the conclusion of Mr. Moore, on reading the debates of the time, that his speeches, when compared with those of his ablest contemporaries, were ‘almost superhuman,’ must be shared by every one who adopts the same means of forming a judgment.”*

After Lord North’s Ministry had, in 1782, succumbed to a vote of the House of Commons, the Marquis of Rockingham was a second time called upon by the King to form an Administration. All the appointments and arrangements for the new Cabinet were made by Burke, in concert with the Marquis. It was a matter of general astonishment that to Burke the subordinate post of Paymaster of the Forces should be assigned; that even a seat in the Cabinet should not have been offered to him; and that a nomination to the Privy Council, together with his office, should have been considered by his colleagues a sufficient reward for his eminent services.

He who had been so long the head of the Parliamentary Opposition was, with his wonted spirit of

* *Quarterly Review*, vol. ciii., pp. 95-6.

self-denial, content to yield to his junior colleague, Fox, the lead of the House of Commons. The latter, indeed, by an equable temper, and by rare debating powers, was well-qualified to conduct a party, whether in office or in Opposition. But his birth and aristocratic connexions alone entitled him to any precedence over Burke. Yet it is inconceivable how the Marquis of Rockingham could have tolerated the exclusion of his illustrious friend from the Cabinet.

Before he accepted the seals of office, that nobleman had stipulated that peace should be concluded with the American colonies ; the plan of economical reform he had advocated in Opposition be carried out ; and various measures of public utility be introduced into Parliament.

In his own office of Paymaster of the Forces, Burke himself made important reforms, and, at a great personal sacrifice, retrenched his own emoluments ; and thus procured a considerable saving to the public Treasury. He had, too, the satisfaction of seeing a large portion of the Bills on economical reform, which two years before he had proposed in the Commons, pass through the two Houses of Legislature, and receive the sanction of the Crown. Many other salutary measures were in preparation when the head of the Administration, the excellent Marquis of Rockingham, was snatched away by the hand of death. In him Burke lost an attached friend, and a zealous patron, and the empire a minister of un sullied honour, and of

enlarged benevolence. His death was a heavy blow to the fortunes of Burke and of his family ; and to the end of his life the latter always spoke of him in terms of gratitude and affection.

On the decease of the Marquis of Rockingham, Lord Shelburne was appointed by the King to be Premier. This post he accepted without consulting his colleagues. Fox, who, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, held so high a position in the Government, conceiving he had been in this case treated with discourtesy, resigned office, and induced, it seems, his friend Burke to follow his example. From the character already given of Lord Shelburne, it is clear that there could be little cordial sympathy between him and the great man whose life I am sketching. Still I think the public judged rightly in looking on the resignation of the two friends as a very hasty step. It was one of the causes, in my opinion, which led to that extreme exacerbation of parties that characterized the ensuing six or seven years.

Lord Shelburne called to his Cabinet the younger Pitt, who, at the early age of twenty-one, was, as we have seen, intrusted with the important functions of Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Under this Administration, the preliminaries of peace between Great Britain and the thirteen United States of America were signed at Paris in 1782.

In order to acquire greater Parliamentary strength, Lord Shelburne deputed Mr. Pitt to hold an interview

with Mr. Fox, in order to induce him and his supporters to resume office under his Administration. This proposal Mr. Fox declined, in case Lord Shelburne persisted in retaining the post of Premier.

At this period Lord North, who had a considerable following in Parliament, was courted alike by the partisans of Lord Shelburne and by those of Mr. Fox. Overtures had already been made to him by the Prime Minister, but they had met with little encouragement. He preferred an alliance with Fox and his party, which in turn was anxiously sought after by that statesman, and most of his friends. To this alliance Burke, it seems, gave but a reluctant assent. This new combination of parties, by concurring on the 21st February, 1783, in a condemnation of the treaty of peace with America, overthrew the Shelburne Administration, and so, under the name of the *Coalition Ministry*, stepped into office.

Burke resumed his former place as Paymaster of the Forces.

In this year he resisted a motion brought forward by Mr. Pitt for Parliamentary Reform, and his very able speech on that occasion will later pass under our consideration. At the same period he drew up two most elaborate and comprehensive reports in the name of the Parliamentary Committee instituted for the purpose of inquiring into the abuses of the Indian Government.

It was now, too, Fox proposed, in an admirable speech, his East India Bill. Of this Bill Mr. Prior has

shown from internal evidence, as well as external, that Fox was the real author ; though, in its preparation, there is every reason to suppose that Burke, from his great knowledge of Indian affairs, must have been frequently consulted.

The latter, in support of Fox's motion, delivered in 1783, one of the noblest harangues that ever fell from his lips. When I come to speak of the author's Indian policy, this speech shall receive due notice. Fox's Bill passed in the Commons by a large majority ; but the unwonted, unprecedented powers it gave to the Lower House over the Executive, rendered it deservedly obnoxious to the Court, and unpopular with a considerable portion of the public. Owing partly to its intrinsic defects, partly to the strenuous exertions of King George III. against it, as well as to the wide-spread influence of the East India interest, the Bill was rejected by the House of Lords.

As soon as the intelligence had reached His Majesty's ears, he sent an order to his Ministers at one o'clock in the morning to resign the seals of office. The youthful Pitt was then charged by the Sovereign with the formation of a Cabinet. The chief members that composed it were, besides himself, the Chancellor Thurlow, and the Home Secretary Dundas. For three months an obstinate struggle between the new Ministry and the Opposition was kept up. Against the most formidable array of talents that was ever witnessed in Parliament, the young Minister displayed

wonderful tact, skill, firmness, and perseverance in holding his arduous position. Backed by his Sovereign, however, and confident of the support of the people, he encountered the assaults of Opposition with courage as well as dexterity, and saw the numbers of his adversaries gradually dwindle away.

In this contest, as Mr. Prior justly observes, the constitutional principles of Burke would not permit him to take so active a part as some of his colleagues. However adverse to his views and interests the change of Administration had been, the King had but exercised herein his constitutional prerogative; and the Minister had as yet brought forward no measure which could challenge the criticism of his opponents. At length, Mr. Pitt, having deemed the favourable moment for a dissolution of Parliament to have arrived, advised the Crown to adopt that course.

The result of the elections of 1784 is well known. The people supported the policy of their Sovereign and of his young Minister; and the Opposition consequently sustained a signal defeat, losing no fewer than one hundred and sixty members.

For several years this defeat of his party embittered the feelings of Burke. Office no sooner enjoyed, had been snatched away from his grasp; the hopes of benefiting his country, as well as of lawfully advancing the interests of his family, had been suddenly blighted. A young generation of senators, little acquainted with the high character and lofty genius

of the Irish orator, occupied seats in the new Parliament. These, intoxicated with the recent success of their party, treated him with marked discourtesy, making the most unseemly interruptions whenever he rose to speak. Such indecorous conduct in Parliament naturally irritated a man of warm feelings, and at times provoked on his part intemperate replies. Those who so severely censure the intemperance of language he at this time occasionally gave way to in the House of Commons, ought to remember the severe trials he had to endure—the total rout of his party—the personal disappointments that were the consequence—the taunts of youthful opponents—and the arduous labours, and heavy discouragements, which for the great cause of humanity, he had to incur in the prosecution of the public delinquents of India.

In 1785, Burke delivered his famous speech on the motion for the payment of the Nabob of Arcot's debts; a speech which was one of the most able and elaborate ever delivered within the walls of Parliament, and which in its proper place shall be duly noticed. This oration, in which allusion is made to a public man, who in despite of a solemn order of the House of Commons, still swayed the destinies of India, was the prelude to the impeachment of that remarkable individual, Warren Hastings. That great judicial process, in which Burke was to take so prominent a part, shall later engage our attention.

In the autumn of 1788, King George III. was afflicted with the most distressing of all maladies—mental alienation.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Pitt, proposed that the Parliament should appoint a Regent during the illness of His Majesty ; that that Regent should be the Prince of Wales ; and that it should determine the extent of the powers with which he should be invested. Burke, Fox, and the rest of their party, on the other hand, contended for the *exclusive* right of the Prince of Wales to the Regency ; that during an interregnum of the Crown, such office, quite independently of Parliament, devolved on the heir-apparent ; and that it was not competent for Parliament to fetter the Regent with unnecessary, and therefore odious, restrictions.

Burke hunted out in our constitutional history for precedents suited to the present critical emergency. Anxious, too, about the state of the King's health, he attended at the examinations of the physicians on that matter before the several Parliamentary Committees, read medical books on the subject of insanity, and even visited lunatic asylums to observe the treatment of the patients. Such was the spirit of ardent inquiry he carried into every subject that engaged his attention.

Pitt and the other Ministers argued that, from the statements of the physicians, the mental malady of His Majesty was likely to be but temporary, and that,

on his speedy recovery, he would be pained to see any extensive changes made, during his illness, in the government of his kingdom. They therefore recommended that the Regent should be restricted from the right of creating peers, and that the guardianship of the royal household should be entrusted to the Queen, advised by a separate council. Burke, Fox, and the other members of Opposition, maintained that great constitutional principles were at stake; that they ought not to be sacrificed to the personal feelings of any monarch under any contingency; that under an hereditary monarchy an elective Regency was something incongruous; and that if the Regency were to endure for any time, such arbitrary limitations on a power designed to represent the royal prerogative would be detrimental to the cause of monarchy itself.

Mr. Pitt wrote to the Prince of Wales, informing him of the intentions of Ministers to propose him to Parliament as Regent during the unhappy illness of his royal parent, as well as of the restrictions which they deemed it expedient to set on the exercise of the Regency. The tone of the letter, considering the high personage to whom it was addressed, was thought by many to be too haughty; but any intentional disrespect was by its author emphatically disclaimed.

The Prince, by the advice of his Whig counsellors, employed the pen of Burke to draw up a reply to the Ministerial letter. That reply is admitted to have been characterized by much dignity, tact, address, and

constitutional knowledge. Burke's championship of the rights of the Prince of Wales was the more meritorious as it was the result of conscientious conviction ; for he had received no favours from the heir-apparent, and, as he declared at the time, knew as much of the interior of Carlton House as he did of that of Buckingham Palace.

On the Regency question very angry debates occurred in the Commons. On both sides of the House the speeches were marked by great personal acrimony ; and Burke, especially, carried away by the heat of debate, violated on several occasions the rules of decorum.

While these violent altercations were going on in Parliament, King George III. happily recovered his soundness of mind ; and, resuming the reins of power, proceeded in state to St. Paul's to return solemn thanksgiving to the Almighty for his return of health.

It is now time to lay before you the views of Burke on Parliamentary Reform. When I have stated his sentiments on this important subject, I will then enter into a disquisition on the philosophy of legislation, wherein, according to the best of my humble ability, I will endeavour to find a philosophic basis, as well as a connecting bond, for those many profound political reflections scattered through the writings of this great publicist. In other words, I will endeavour to show how the teachings of practical wisdom and practical experience, as set forth by him, may be justified by

the deductions of speculative philosophy. The foundations of political science rest partly on Divine Revelation and on solemn judgments of the Church, and partly on the wisdom and experience of mankind. The one portion claims Divine certainty; the other possesses the highest amount of human probability. The one no Catholic Christian can disavow; the other every wise man must accept. Guided by these lights—the one supernatural, the other natural—the Christian, possessing but ordinary powers, may enter upon the arduous enquiry. It behoves him, however, to walk with due self-distrust, and to remember that, even in the defence of truth and with the best intentions, he is liable to err.

Bespeaking, then, your kind indulgence, I will proceed to my task.

After I have laid down the general principles of political philosophy, I will analyze the works of Burke on the French Revolution, and test his opinions by the standard of those principles so inculcated, and then show how consistent were the censures he pronounced on the spirit and tendencies of English Radicalism, with his condemnation of the genius and character of the French Revolution from its earliest to its latest stage. No enquiry surely is more attractive, as well as more important, to the Christian and to the statesman. Political philosophy, at all times so weighty a branch of metaphysical science, challenges, in an age so distracted as our own, redoubled attention.

In the latter part of the American war there was a great ferment in the public mind of England, and it was then, for the first time, that modern Radicalism rose up to the surface of society. The Republican spirit, which for more than a century had been dormant, was now evoked, and stalked abroad in the face of day.

In the year 1780, Alderman Sawbridge introduced in the House of Commons two Bills—one for shortening the duration of Parliaments, the other for lowering the elective franchise.

Burke, who, on future occasions, was to resist Parliamentary Reform, rose now for the first time to oppose the measure brought forward by the worthy alderman. He delivered on this occasion a most effective speech, of which we have, unfortunately, but a fragmentary report. It was at the time considered most able, and is even now read with considerable interest.

The orator begins by exposing the ulterior designs of those, who assail the existing constitution of the House of Commons :—

“ The great object of most of these Reformers,” says he, “ is to prepare the destruction of the constitution by disgracing and discrediting the House of Commons. For they think (prudently, in my opinion,) that if they can persuade the nation that the House of Commons is so constituted as not to secure the public liberty—not to have a proper connection with the public interests: so constituted as not either actually or vir-

tually to be the representative of the people—it will be easy to prove that a Government composed of a monarchy—an oligarchy chosen by the Crown, and such a House of Commons—whatever good can be in such a system, can by no means be a system of free government.

“The British Constitution,” he continues, “is never to have its *quietus*; it is to be vilified, attacked, reproached, resisted; instead of a sure hope and anchor amid our storms, the means of redress to our grievances, it is made the grand grievance itself—our shame instead of our glory.”

After showing that nine-tenths of the advocates of Parliamentary Reform demand it as a natural, inalienable right, he goes on to observe, that the thing demanded, a reform of the House of Commons, is infinitely short of the principle of the demand. “What,” he exclaims, *one-third* only of the Legislature, and of the Government no share at all! What sort of treaty of partition is this for those who have an inherent right to the *whole*? Give them all they ask, and your grant is still a cheat; for how comes only a third to be their younger children’s fortune in this settlement? How came they neither to have the choice of kings, or lords, or judges, or generals, or admirals, or bishops, or priests, or ministers, or justices of the peace? Why, what have you to answer in favour of the prior rights of the Crown and of the Peerage but this—our Constitution is a *prescriptive* Constitution?”

Burke, a practical statesman, and addressing a popular assembly, bases his defence of the Constitution on prescription. "Prescription," he observes, "is the most solid of all titles, not only to property, but what is to secure that property—to Government. It is a presumption in favour of any settled scheme of Government, that a nation has long existed and flourished under it. It is a better presumption even of the choice of a nation, far better than any sudden and temporary arrangement by actual election."*

Now addressing those who advocate Parliamentary Reform, not on the ground of *natural right*, but on the basis of *political expediency*, Burke speaks as follows:—"Now," says he, "I ask what advantage do you find, that the places which abound in representation, possess over others, in which it is more scanty, in security for freedom, in security for justice, or in any one of those means of procuring temporal prosperity and eternal happiness, the ends for which society was formed? Are the local interests of Cornwall and Wiltshire,† for instance—their roads, canals, their prisons, their police—better than those of Yorkshire, Warwickshire, or Staffordshire? Warwick has members—is Warwick or Stafford more opulent, happy, or free than Newcastle or Birmingham? Is Wiltshire the pampered favourite, whilst Yorkshire, like the child

* Works, vol. v., pp. 409-10.

† N.B. These were counties where there were many close boroughs.

of the bondwoman, is turned out to the desert?" It may, perhaps, be said, that these observations of Burke strike at the root of all legislative representation whatsoever. But the number of representatives of a county, or the uniformity of the suffrage in different cities, is not necessary to secure the efficiency of representation. The Parliamentary representative is not sent to the Legislature merely to advocate the interests of a particular locality, but to promote the general welfare of the empire; and such arithmetical exactness is not necessary to insure the great objects of legislation. The late lamented Frederick Lucas, who unfortunately was carried off just as his genius had entered on a new and more useful phase of its existence, and who, with his masculine sense, had on many points well entered into the spirit of Burke, observed, on one occasion (and I quote his words from memory), that "the opinion that the extension of the suffrage was a necessary means for promoting the prosperity and happiness of the people, was one of the shallowest of modern heresies."

Burke objected to the shortening of the duration of Parliaments: first, because short Parliaments were calculated to increase the expenses of the candidates; secondly, to promote venality and corruption on the part of the electors; thirdly, to prevent a steady, consecutive policy on the part of the Government; and, fourthly, to retard the progress of useful legislation. The speech he delivered on this subject was, it is said,

instrumental in preventing the Reformers of 1832 from bringing back triennial Parliaments.

In 1780, Burke addressed a letter on Parliamentary Reform to the Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Committee, that was preparing a petition to Parliament on that subject. From this letter I will cite one or two passages that have particularly struck me:—

“It is not everything,” he says, “which appears at first view to be faulty in such a complicated plan that is to be determined to be so in reality. To enable us to correct the Constitution, the whole Constitution must be viewed together ; and it must be compared with the actual state of the people and the circumstances of the time. For, that which, taken singly and by itself, may appear to be wrong, when considered in relation to other things, may be perfectly right, or, at least, such as ought to be patiently endured, as the means of preventing something that is worse.

“So far, with regard to what, at first view, may appear a *distemper* in the Constitution. As to the *remedy* of that distemper, an equal caution ought to be used ; because this latter consideration is not single and separate, no more than the former. There are many things in reformation which would be proper to be done, if other things could be done along with them ; but which, if they cannot be so accomplished, ought not to be done at all. I therefore wish, when any new matter of this deep nature is proposed to me, to have the whole scheme distinctly in my view, and

full time to consider of it. Please God, I will walk with caution whenever I am not able clearly to see my way." *

The whole letter is written in this tone of extreme moderation. It is thus, in the minutest fragments of Burke, we are sure to find some treasure of thought or of eloquence—something to delight the fancy, or to inform the reason.

So, from these extracts, we see that the practical statesman confirmed the deep remark of the philosophic Pascal, that "the true way to subvert institutions was to probe their origin."

Our great publicist did not believe in the enchanters of his own time, who promised that, in their magic cauldron, the British Constitution should, like old Æson, gain rejuvenescence, and come forth more comely of aspect, better proportioned in limb, and more perfect in function than heretofore. And were he, after seventy years, to rise up from his tomb, and see how signally all his political predictions have been verified, he would not, I think, be disposed to place more confidence in the promises of our modern magicians. He asked in his time, and he would ask again, who are the parties most anxious for Parliamentary Reform? What are their religious and political principles? What are the ulterior objects they sometimes openly avow—sometimes craftily conceal? How are they affected towards the throne and the peerage?

* Works, vol. v., p. 233, Bohn's ed.

What is the relation of the House of Commons since 1688 to the other branches of the Legislature? What is the nature of the proposed reforms? And, if comparatively innoxious, are they accompanied with declarations, or do they involve principles, which must lead to further and perilous changes? Do those Reformers sympathize with the Revolutionists who, in other countries, have spread havoc and desolation? Such questions are surely pertinent, and not unworthy of reply.

If Burke blamed the architects that were for making arbitrary changes in the temple of the Constitution, who, without reference to the original plan of the edifice, or without considering how some of its main pillars and columns had, in the course of ages, been unduly weakened and sunk, were for extending and enlarging the nave; he yet wished that all who were capable of joining in the services, should be admitted within its sacred precincts. And it was surely not *his* fault that, seventy years ago, the portals of that temple were not thrown open to Catholic Ireland, which he so tenderly loved, and whose rights he so eloquently defended.

It may be asked, how was it that a statesman like Burke, so zealous for conciliatory measures towards the colonists of America, for the retrenchment of useless expenditure at home, for the removal of commercial restrictions, and for the abolition of religious disabilities in Great Britain and in Ireland, should yet

have been so much opposed to Parliamentary Reform? Now, without at present taking into consideration the particular measures of Parliamentary Reform proposed during his life, and still less meaning to affirm that a certain modification in the constitution of the House of Commons may not be justifiable in theory and safe in practice; still I make bold to affirm that any serious changes in the constitution of a country—in one of the branches of the Legislature, and that not the least important—in the relations between the different orders and classes of society—are attended with the utmost danger. It was because Burke was an *Administrative Reformer*, he was a *Constitutional Conservative*. Thus, the mistakes of rulers, the errors and passions of subjects, time itself, introduce abuses into all states; and the correction of such abuses is needful to the healthful conservation of the Commonwealth. Let us seek an analogy in those two forms of society between which the State subsists—the Family and the Church. When disorders occur in the family, arising either from lavish expenditure, or from neglect of the children's education, or from unhappy dissensions, or from vice and intemperance on the part of the head, how are these disorders cured? Is it not by retrenchment of useless expenses—by the better training of the offspring—by the kindly mediation of friends—by reform of conduct? These are all *administrative* reforms, and not *organic changes*, in the constitution of the family, which

remains intact, as God had created and Christ reformed it.

Again, in the Church—that greatest and most perfect of all societies—when abuses creep in, and heresies spring up, she puts forth formularies to condemn doctrinal error, and frames canons to correct disorders in clergy and laity. But in carrying out such reforms, she never alters the Divine type of her Constitution, and never changes the relations between the Papacy, the Episcopate, and the Presbytery. Her reforms are *administrative*, and not *constitutional*.

These analogies point out the course to be pursued in the reformation of the Commonwealth. The form of the State cannot, indeed, boast of an immediately Divine institution ; and, therefore, there is in this case, not strict *identity*, but only *analogy* in the mode of amelioration.

This passage I had written when I lighted on one in Burke, which confirms the view I have taken as to the distinction between *constitutional* and *administrative* reforms. “There is a difference,” says he, “between a moral or political exposure of a public evil relative to *the administration of government*, whether in men or systems, and a declaration of defects, real or supposed, *in the fundamental constitution of your country*.” This is from a speech delivered, in 1782, on the very subject of Parliamentary Reform.

These observations lead me by a natural transition to enter into the promised disquisition on the nature

and origin of the State, its relations to the Family and to the Church, as well as its various component parts.

The views of Burke on the political principles and projects of English Radicalism, and of the French Revolution, cannot be completely vindicated without an inquiry into the general nature and organism of the State, and then into the special character of the British Constitution, and of the temperate Mediæval Monarchy, of which it originally formed a branch.

Though the form of the State has not been, as in the family and in the Church, directly defined by God ; yet is civil society, which is the necessary development of the family, and where alone the physical, moral, and mental faculties of man can be exercised, sprung of a divine origin. And as society (with the admission of all,) cannot possibly exist without power, power, whatever be its form, must therefore be instituted by *Him* who ordained society. This great truth, which is the pivot of the whole social economy, has been strongly inculcated in the Jewish and the Christian dispensations. "There is no power but of God," saith the Apostle, "and they that are, are ordained of God ; and he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and purchaseth to himself damnation." There are several other texts of Scripture to the same effect. And this truth was well known to the Heathen ; for the old Greek Gnostic poet says :—

"The monarch holds his sceptre of the gods."

The doctrine of the Sovereignty of the People, by making the civil power spring out of the will of the nation, supposes civil society to be a mere arbitrary, contingent creation, dependent on man's volition, and not on God's institution. For we have seen that the two things—civil society on the one hand, and civil authority on the other, are terms correlative, and perfectly inseparable. Hence the celebrated French philosopher, M. de Bonald, and another great writer, once the pride and glory of the Church of France, did not hesitate to call the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people an *atheistic* doctrine. This harsh epithet I will not adopt, out of respect to those estimable Catholics who, honestly labouring under an error, have held the doctrine in question. But I will frankly own, that it were difficult for them to evade the logical force of the stricture. It is true that while some Catholic theologians maintain that the civil power comes *directly* from the Deity, others have held that it comes *indirectly* from God through the people; adding that the people, under pain of perishing, must constitute some civil authority. But Balmez shows that the two opinions are perfectly reconcilable; nay, that the dispute is all but a verbal one. For no one ever maintained that the Almighty was wont to send an Angel from Heaven to designate the Monarch or the civil Magistrate to the people; and no Catholic theologian, I believe, ever asserted that the State had received from God a definite

organization, such as had been given to the Family and to the Church. And when it is added, that the people must of necessity constitute a power, what is this but to assert the *social need* of authority, or in other words, its *Divine institution*? Hence every Catholic school re-echoes the great doctrine of the Scripture, "that there is no power but of God, and they that are, are ordained of God."

Here it may be proper to observe, that the Catholic dogma steers a middle course between two opposite errors:—the error of those who hold the absolute indefeasibility of the civil power, under all contingencies and in all circumstances, and the error of such as maintain the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, or the people's right arbitrarily to depose their rulers.

That the State should not have received from the Almighty a definite organization, like those immediate works of His hands, the Family and the Church, is a fact grounded, I think, on two solid reasons. The first is, that the State grew out of the family, and in its evolutions, probably passed from paternity through the various stages of the Patriarchate, the Chieftainship, and lastly, Royalty. I say *probably*, because a cloud overhangs the origin of human societies; but as far as historical inquiry, aided by the light of speculation, analogy, and experience seems to show, the constitution of those early societies was monarchical. For the Republic rises up only in the later ages

of history, and even then only in consequence of internal revolutions, or of the establishment of new colonies by independent settlers. I defined it on a former occasion, "a municipal Corporation accidentally detached from the parent Monarchy." *

The second reason wherefore the State should not have received from the Divine Author of society a fixed constitution, is, that it was destined to meet the wants and exigencies of mankind under every variety of circumstance, and amid all the diversities of time and place. And, moreover, it was not to be guarded, like the Church, against the corruptions of error, or the vicissitudes of time, but was under a general superintending Providence, to be abandoned to the devices and the control of human reason.

Hence, as the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people is utterly false and absurd, the people in none of its grades, whether high or low, can possess an inherent, absolute right to political power. Its claims must rest solely on political expedience and propriety. Reasons of state, and not natural justice, must be the measure and standard of political privileges. Hence, to claim for every subject in the Commonwealth, irrespective of all intellectual, moral, and material qualifications, the right of political suffrage is the most monstrous of all pretensions. In Pagan antiquity the masses were not only left without a participation of

* See in my first series of Lectures on Ancient and Modern History, the fifth Lecture. London : Dolman, 1858.

political privileges, but were reduced to a state of the most ignominious servitude. And in the republics of Greece and Rome, their condition was still more wretched than under the Oriental Monarchies. It is the glory of Catholic Christianity to have enfranchised those masses, to have placed them on a footing of perfect spiritual equality with their superiors in the social scale, and to have made them co-heirs with Christ. But if that Divine Religion emancipated them from the yoke of sin and of superstition, if it struck off their social fetters, and fenced their personal freedom round with inviolable rights ; it could not invert the natural relations of society. It could not impart to those engaged from morn till night in manual toil the knowledge and experience of political life, so various and so complicated in all its relations, nor teach men who have to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow a high liberality of sentiment, and a vigilant and enlightened regard for the rights and interests of all classes. Christianity did not violently change the domestic and the political relations, but gently and gradually amended, purified, exalted, and spiritualized them. It regenerated the individual ; abolished polygamy and divorce in the family ; imparted a new dignity to woman ; tempered the authority of the father by taking from him the terrible right of life and death over his offspring ; mitigated and finally abolished slavery ; rendered, by proclaiming its Divine origin, the civil power more stable, and therefore less suspicious

and more clement; breathed a spirit of noble equity and humanity into all legislation and judicature; introduced a new law of nations, founded on Christian fraternity; united all classes in happy concord, and laid the deep foundations of a well-ordered political freedom. But it had to deal with fragile elements, to work in a world of sin and woe, where, though the handwriting had been blotted out against man, the temporal penalties of his primeval fall were still retained. The social reforms wrought by Christianity were *conditional*, and *progressive*, and *limited*: conditional according as men received and carried out its doctrines and precepts—progressive, as those reforms were to be adapted to the successive stages of human society—and limited, because this world was still to be a place of expiation as well as of trial, still to be a valley of tears. Hence you see how hollow and deceitful are the promises of all those sophists who, from the Gnostic heretics of the first ages of the Church down to the Socialists of our time, announce to the world an era of *immediate*, *supreme*, and *boundless* bliss. Immeasurably great as were the blessings conferred on mankind by Christianity, it did not restore, and was not designed to restore, the happiness of the Paradisaic state.

Violent political revolutions, on the other hand, brought about by human agency, are destructive to a State; and by violent political revolutions I understand not only those achieved by insurrection, (and

these are not the most dangerous), but those introduced by vicious legislation, whether proceeding from a Monarch or a senate—a vicious legislation that either runs counter to those primary principles of social science recognized by the general sense and experience of mankind, or to the traditions, habits, manners, predilections, and fundamental institutions of a country. I need not add, that if the element of heresy, and still more of irreligion, be superadded, the viciousness of such legislation would be infinitely aggravated. But I here confine myself to the domain of politics ; and I repeat that violent political revolutions are destructive to a State, and for two reasons.

In the first place, civil society is not of human institution ; and though its form, indeed, has not been specially ordained of God, yet the sudden disrapture by revolution of the form from the divinely-created substance, must needs injure the latter, and so defeat the designs of Providence, and prove most adverse to the welfare of a nation.

Secondly, a State is a thing essentially *traditional* ; it lives by the regular transmission of heritable rights, interests, property, ranks and degrees, laws and institutions. A thing essentially traditional cannot be destroyed and created anew by the reason of man ; and therefore, this very attempt on his part brings ruin on society. Men can no more create a State, than they can create a plant. They may in the one case, as in the other, give a peculiar bent to its growth, or engraft

on its stem another stock ; but they cannot, without destruction, change its nature.

Take, for example, one of the ancient law-givers, invited by a Greek Republic, to quell, by a new system of legislation, the dissensions of its citizens. He cannot by his laws change the soil and climate of the country, nor its physical circumscription, nor the peculiar relations wherein this republic stands to other states. Yet these are circumstances which all will have a great influence on its future history. He will not, and he cannot if he would, alter the Religion and the manners of the people, though, as in antiquity, the State embraced the religious, civil, and domestic relations, he will introduce some new rites in the one, and correct some disorders in the other. And as to the political constitution itself, his changes (and modern research tends to confirm this view), will be far from radical. He will merely commit to writing immemorial customs, or revive some old laws, that have fallen into desuetude, or give them a new force or expansion, or borrow some law or institution he has found prevailing in foreign lands. He will fix with greater precision the respective rights of the different classes of citizens, assign the amount of taxation which each shall have to pay, and propose special laws for carrying out these projects.

The most striking change in those Greek states was the substitution of temporary Magistrates for the hereditary, though limited Royalty of the heroic times.

But this change was only gradually brought about, and its important results did not become apparent till a much later period.

So we see by the example of these old law-givers, who received from their fellow-citizens such large discretionary powers of legislation, how limited was their scope of action—how many physical and even moral data, influencing the destinies of the State with which they were concerned, were absolutely beyond their control ; how all political changes which are destined to be salutary and permanent, must be only the modification or development of pre-existing forms ; and how futile and destructive are all attempts to form a constitution at a single cast, without regard to existing rights and interests, without reference to the past, to historical traditions, and habits, and institutions, to the genius of a particular people, as well as to the lessons of universal experience.

Having now at considerable length examined the origin and nature of civil government, I can say but a few words on the principles which determine its rise, progress, and extinction. Is the State a mere physical being, having by a law of nature its fixed periods of growth, bloom, maturity, and decay ? Or is it a moral essence, resting exclusively on the exercise of the will and of the intelligence of the human beings who compose it ? It is neither. It is a physico-moral entity, subject to the action of many, and various, and most powerful agents, which shall presently be described.

Let us carefully examine this matter, which has not received the attention it deserves.

In one of his most thoughtful and eloquent works, the "Letters on a Regicide Peace," Burke himself writes :—"I am not quite of the mind of those speculators who seem assured that necessarily, and by the constitution of things, all states have the same periods of infancy, manhood, and decrepitude, that are found in the individuals who compose them. . . . Individuals are physical beings, subject to laws universal and invariable. . . . But Commonwealths are not physical but moral essences. They are artificial combinations, and in their proximate efficient cause the arbitrary productions of the mind. . . . There is not in the physical order (with which they do not appear to hold any assignable connexion) a distinct cause by which any of those fabrics must necessarily grow, flourish, or decay ; nor in my opinion does the moral world produce anything more determinate on that subject than what may serve as an amusement (liberal, indeed, and ingenious, but still only an amusement) for speculative men. I doubt whether the history of mankind is yet complete enough, if ever it can be so, to furnish grounds for a sure theory on the internal causes which necessarily affect the fortune of a State. I am far from denying the operation of such causes ; but they are infinitely uncertain, and much more obscure, and much more difficult to trace, than the foreign causes that tend to raise,

to depress, and sometimes to overwhelm a community."

Here we see the great writer has bright glimpses of the truth—his native sagacity is struggling with the false opinion so prevalent in the eighteenth century, that civil society was "an artificial combination," as he calls it—a sort of fortuitous aggregation of human atoms into a cosmos, called the State. As long as Burke remains within the sphere of political empiricism, he is an incomparable master; but when he ascends the heights of philosophic speculation, his step becomes less sure and less bold.

Let us now turn to the pages of another great writer, who possessed in a higher degree than any other I am acquainted with the gift of philosophic intuition—at least, as applied to history—and who stood on the vantage-ground of Catholicism, and whose mind was, besides, enriched by the experience and the discussions of the eventful forty years that followed on the death of Burke.

"Independently," says Frederick Schlegel, "of that progressive power of reason inherent in all the forms and departments of human activity; and independently of the operations of Divine Providence, which form that high mysterious chain of unity that links together the different periods of man's social progress; independently, I say, of all these, there is a law of nature—a high and secret principle of nature—presiding over the life and growth of human society,

which, if kept in due subordination to the higher principle of Providence, will not be found incompatible with it. . . . In following the current of events in history, the historical observer can accurately distinguish the different periods of national development: the first period of artless, yet marvellous childhood; the next, of the first bloom and flush of youth; later, the maturer vigour and activity of manhood: and, at last, the symptoms of approaching age, a state of general decay and second childishness."* So far Schlegel.

In this passage we see most luminously unfolded all the principles which preside over the growth of human society, and which were dimly apprehended by the mind of Burke. Here the fixed laws of nature—the free, spontaneous energy of the human reason acting thereon—the mysterious operations of Divine Providence, ordering all things to its own adorable ends, rewarding or chastening here below the abuse or the right direction of man's reason and free-will—these are all admirably pointed out. In another passage this writer shows how that fallen creature—man—in his efforts after temporal as well as eternal happiness, is, on one hand, aided by the kindly ministrations of blessed spirits, and, on the other, thwarted and misled by those rebel angels, whose dark chief is rightly termed by him "the most potent and most intellectual egotist of all created beings, whether in the visible or invisible world.

* "Philosophy of History," p. 310.


Thus, to sum up the preceding observations, I have shown that the State is an evolution from the Family ; that it is essentially traditional in its nature ; that its destiny is determined partly by natural causes, like climate, soil, physical circumscription, as well as by moral agents, both alike being beyond the reach of human control ; that, being of a nature partly physical, partly moral, it is subject to the great law of growth, maturity, and decay, but subject also to the direction of human reason, whether for good or for evil—whether that reason act spontaneously within the sphere of its native powers, or whether, in certain cases, it be guided by Divine Revelation, or be misdirected by the powers of darkness. The action of Divine Providence on the State, as well as that of spirits, beneficent or malign—the one striving to carry out, the other to thwart, the gracious designs of Heaven in man's regard—has also been pointed out.

Thus have I endeavoured, according to the small measure of my ability, and sometimes assisted by a great master, who has been cited, to lay the philosophic basis for those profound political observations dispersed through the writings of Burke. By the principles here inculcated, it will be easy to estimate the character and the tendency of all political changes, whether they be salutary or be pernicious.

The views of Burke on the so-called Reform of Parliament, and on the principles and proceedings of the French Constituent Assembly, whose errors, moral and

political, led logically to the crimes and horrors of the Convention, will be analyzed in the next Lecture. There, as I have already treated of the essence of the State, I will first speak of its component parts—Royalty, Aristocracy, Civil Establishment of the Church, Parliamentary Representation of the three orders—the Clergy, Nobles, and Commons—and Municipal Corporations; and I will show how all these institutions have their deep foundations in the very nature of things.

THIRD LECTURE.

N my last Lecture, I described the origin and nature of the State, and endeavoured to trace the laws, physical and moral, of its destiny. I now proceed, according to promise, to speak of its component parts. These are, when the State is, in its constitution, monarchical — Royalty, Aristocracy, Civil Establishment of the Church, Parliamentary Representation of the Clergy, Nobles, and Commons, and Municipal Corporations. In the Republic, when it is well organized, most of these institutions prevail ; but on that form of government I shall say a few words when I have concluded my remarks on the monarchical constitution.

I. Royalty, as Aristotle well observes, is the most ancient and the most widely diffused form of government. We find it, at least in its more elementary form, already established in the earliest dawn of history, and we trace its existence through every grade of civilization, and in countries the most remote from each other in space, and the most widely

divergent in religion, manners, customs, habits, and intellectual culture.

Royalty is, in political society, the vivid representation of the domestic paternity from which it evolves. Its hereditary character makes it better suited than any other form of government to the *traditional* nature of the State. Being personal, it inspires feelings of attachment which an abstract corporation like a Senate can never call forth. It is the principle of cohesion—the all-pervading spirit that holds the different parts of the body politic together.

2. Aristocracy is an institution still more widely diffused than Royalty; for, except in little pastoral communities, like some of the Swiss Cantons, it is everywhere found in one shape or in another—in the Republic no less than in the Monarchy. Even in the American Democracy, the planters of Virginia, the two Carolinas, Georgia, and Louisiana, and other States, formed—at least, down to the late civil war—an aristocracy, wealthy and powerful.

Aristocracy springs out of that inequality of conditions produced by the great diversities in the character, the circumstances, the physical health and strength, the manual skill, the intellectual powers, and the duration of life among different men. These striking diversities are the natural consequences of man's primeval fall. Since, accordingly, there must be in human society an inequality of conditions, and, consequently, a subordination of ranks, the question

occurs, how is that inequality to be made the least irksome to the feelings of men, and the most conducive to the general weal? If property be, as it is, the badge and the instrument of human freedom; how is that badge and that instrument to be used in a manner the most useful, as well as the most attractive to the community?

The distinctions conferred by mere wealth have at no time, and in no place, been as much respected, esteemed, and honoured, as those bestowed by birth. It is the glory of military prowess, and the fame of great civil services, transmitted from age to age, that consecrate wealth, repress the jealousy and envy of mankind, and command their grateful homage.

But not only the admiration for martial glory, and the sense of gratitude for civil services conferred, attach nations to their noble houses; but the very respect for antiquity, inherent to human nature, invests those families with a certain halo of splendour. If, as I showed on the last occasion, the State is essentially traditional in its nature, must not an institution, like Nobility, which links one generation of men to another, which is the living organ of national recollections, traditions, habits, manners, and general spirit, be one eminently conformable to the ends for which civil society was formed?

Again, the existence of a State is bound up with its independence; and that independence is guarded and upheld by the armed force. But who in all ages

and in all countries have been the natural leaders of the armed force but the Nobles? Thus the need of security—the innate respect for antiquity—as well as gratitude and admiration for martial prowess, and civil services, superadded to the resources of superior wealth, form the deep foundations on which all aristocracy rests.

In the heroic times of Ancient Greece, the Nobles were allied to the gods, and, sprung of Royal race, had been the conquerors of the subject tribes, the founders of colonies, the victorious leaders of armies, as well as the possessors of princely domains. To these titles to respect, many of their noble houses added the dignity of an hereditary priesthood.

In the Monarchies of Ancient India, Persia, and Egypt, the noble or warrior caste was separated by an insurmountable barrier from the sacerdotal class. The State, like the Patriarchate, was still theocratic, for the King, before putting on the royal robes, was first received into the priestly caste.

Under the Christian Dispensation, where the Divine Founder had made His Church a free, self-existent society, independent in spiritual affairs of all civil authority and legislation, the Nobility had, of course, no inherent right to the priestly dignity. The only priesthood it received was by the rites of Christian chivalry, whereby it swore to defend the weak and the helpless, and to guard inviolate the sacred traditions of honour.

3. This leads me to speak of the spiritual aristocracy in the Christian state ; an aristocracy, which as, from its divine institution, and the sublime nature of its functions, it far transcends in importance all other orders, so accordingly enjoys a precedency of civil honour.

In the Patriarchal Dispensation, the civil and the spiritual powers were blended—the tribe chieftain and the priest were one and the same. Under the Jewish law, those powers, which, like twin-flowers, had hitherto grown together on the same stem, were separated, and blossomed apart. In the Christian Dispensation, where the Church was destined for all nations, and all ages, that separation of the two powers, the temporal and the ecclesiastical, was still more marked and decided than in Israel's local and temporary Church. The immaculate spouse of Christ was not to be in the discharge of her functions under the control of man: the kingdom, where the Holy Spirit had set up His oracle, was not to be profaned by the caprice of human power. This spiritual independence of the Christian Church, so necessary to promote the ends of her sublime mission, was most conducive to the welfare of civil society. It narrowed the sphere of political authority, wrested from it the interpretation of the laws of eternal justice, not only introduced a new and better code of public and private rights, but set up an independent tribunal for their adjudication ; a tribunal that could proclaim to

kings and to subjects alike their rights and their duties. To this spiritual independence of the ecclesiastical power, we must mainly ascribe the great stability and freedom of Christian States, and the vast superiority of modern civilization.

But though distinct, these two great institutions, Church and State, are still to be connected. And how can it be otherwise? How can public as well as private virtues be exercised, except by a reference to the unseen world? How can civil society exist without the practice of the moral duties? And how can the moral precepts be expounded, and inculcated, and enforced without the sanction of religion? But will that sanction be so authoritative, without the co-operation of civil magistrates and civil laws? Yet unless religion be recognized by the State, as a great moral guide, and its organ, the priesthood, be invested with a certain measure of political dignity and power; how can that co-operation be in any wise effectual? Hence the close union between the spiritual and the temporal powers, religion and civil society, in all ages, and in all countries, and under every variety of creeds.

The State, dissociated from religion, becomes an unholy thing, that will soon lose its hold on the reverence and affections of the people. Isolated from the Church, it will soon become isolated from the Family, be severed from all connection with the past, and forfeit the heritage of the future. So defecrated,

the State will soon become a "*vile corpus*," fit only for the rude experiments of political charlatans. Low, sordid, selfish aims will supersede the generous instincts of a religious patriotism ; loyalty will be measured by the standard of interests, and the secret influence of a godless legislation, and the bad example of Magistrates officially ignoring Religion, will carry corruption into many a household. And in all cases it will lead to a harsh dissonance between public and private life, and to an antagonism between the spiritual and temporal powers. Let any one who doubts the truth of these observations, cast his eyes on the neighbouring country of Belgium. There this experiment (in Europe, at least,) has first been tried ; and there, consequently, a most Catholic people has been made the victim of a cruel divorce between Church and State.

And not the State only, but the Church also, suffers by this unholy separation. Doubtless, the Universal Church hath all ages for her inheritance ; she hath received from her Divine Founder the promise of everlasting duration : a promise which all the violence of men, and all the craft of hell, have for near nineteen hundred years failed to render void. But each particular province of that vast spiritual empire is not equally unfailing. Churches, once flourishing in piety and learning, have unhappily, by schism, or heresy, or misbelief, been torn away from the Rock of Ages. Hence the perpetuation of the Catholic faith in those

national Churches depends on the influence they exercise on the minds and hearts of their people, and on the correspondence of that people to their instruction and example, as well as to the general action of Divine grace. But to perpetuate that influence of the National Church, which does not rest on a Divine decree, all human aids and appliances must be resorted to. That Church must strike its roots deep into the soil on one hand, and on the other, raise its towering summit to the skies. It must intertwine its boughs with the customs, habits, manners, arts, literature, science, laws, institutions, and property of a people. And the Catholic nations, in so honouring the Church, and incorporating her, if I may so speak, with their political institutions, have but acted according to the universal instincts of mankind, and in conformity to the very essence of civil society; for this, as we saw on the last occasion, is of Divine institution.* And this leads me to the next point,—the Parliamentary Representation of the Clergy, Nobles, and Commons.

4. Like all the other great institutions of civil society, the Parliamentary representation of the several orders has its type in the family. When the son has reached, or nearly so, his age of majority, the wife and affec-

* The doctrine of the separation of Church and State, which I have here combated on philosophic grounds, has been censured by a solemn judgment of the Holy See in the Encyclicals *Mirari vos* and *Quantà Curâ*, accepted as they have been by the whole Church.

tionate father lays before him the state of his affairs, introduces him to his agents, and endeavours to familiarize him with the management of his property. In matters of great importance, the father will summon all the elder members of the family to meet and advise with him ; and it is thus the well-being of the household is secured and perpetuated. It is so in the State ; and this analogy did not escape the penetrative mind of the illustrious Fénelon, when he addressed urgent remonstrances to Louis XIV. on his suspension of the ancient constitution of France.

The clergy, the great teacher of moral and social, as of religious truths, is of necessity the perpetual counsellor of the Crown. From the very fact that, as we have seen, civil society is a Divine institution, and its alliance with Religion, in one form or another, a thing of primary necessity ; the social position of the clergy is clearly marked out. They represent the Divine element in human society—the bond of connection between the visible and the invisible world. And representing such momentous interests, they surely are entitled to what all nations have accorded to them—the highest rank in the State.

When true to its holy calling, its piety, virtues, charity, learning, ample possessions, and civil status insure to the clerical order a very great influence ; but still that influence is but indirect. It is only by a participation in the public councils—by a share in legislation—the Clergy can effectually defend their

temporal rights, and the higher and still more important interests of Religion. It is in the national Senate only they can effectually uphold the prerogatives of the Crown, or check its encroachments, can support or counteract, as occasion may require, the influence of the secular aristocracy, and can defend the rights, or check the licentiousness of the people. The exclusion of the Hierarchy from the national Senate leaves, therefore, an irreparable void in the State. Such exclusion would be utterly inconsistent with the alliance between Church and State, which, as we have seen, is a primary principle of constitutional policy.

And now as to the Nobility. If the latter be, as I have endeavoured to show, so important an element in the State, it is surely called on to hold a high place in the national councils. If it represents the very highest kind of property, immoveable or territorial possessions; if it is the imperfonation of a nation's military glory and diplomatic skill; if it is the link that connects the past and present times of a people's history; if it is the organ of national traditions, recollections, and public spirit;—what class is better entitled to furnish counselors to the Crown, and to take part in the national Legislature? Hence the clergy and the nobility have, in all ages and in all countries, been the two main pillars of the State. These co-exist with it from its earliest origin to the latest period of its existence. The one symbolizes the principles of material force and of

political stability ; the other the principles of spiritual life and of intellectual power. If these two great members—the Clergy and the Nobility—be devoid of that substantial power which Parliamentary representation can alone insure ;—then the whole body politic becomes feeble and languishing. In such a state of things, the rights of their respective orders cannot be duly upheld, nor their support of the regal prerogatives and of popular freedom be adequately insured. Thus the short-sighted policy of Absolutism leaves the two main bulwarks of the throne nearly dismantled. The Sovereign, in the exercise of his power, unchecked by the moral counsels of the priesthood on the one hand, and by the conservative instincts of the aristocracy on the other, becomes the hapless tool of the first charlatan, or profligate adventurer, who obtrudes himself on his councils. It is one of the vices of absolute Monarchy, and one which slowly prepares the way for revolution, that the political significance of aristocracy should be gradually lost, and that the advantages of a civil establishment of Religion should become less obvious to the popular mind.

But a member is still wanting to the Christian temperate Monarchy, and without which it would be very imperfectly organized. This is the Commonalty, or the Third Estate. If the Clergy represent the Divine element of spiritual life, and the Aristocracy the element of political stability, the Third Estate symbolizes the principle of progress. Those two great prin-

ciples—the principles of movement and of repose—of gravitation and of impulsion—of stability and of progress—are the fundamental laws in all physical, and moral, and social life. In politics, there can be no true freedom without order, and no true order without freedom. And thus, to give an illustration, there are no Commonwealths which exhibit such a state of degrading servitude as the Mohammedan states, and yet in none are revolts and revolutions so frequent.

The Third Estate is the youngest member, but not the least important one, of the political family. If it appears later on the stage of history, it ever plays a great part, whether for good or for evil. In the ancient republics, when Royalty had disappeared from the scene, this plebeian order carried on a fierce contest with the aristocracy, triumphed over it, and, after a brief and stormy rule, surrendered the State into the arms of military tyranny.

In the modern temperate Monarchy, where the Christian Religion fought, as far as this fallen world would permit, to re-establish political harmony, the Third Estate fulfilled an important mission. In the early part of the Middle Age, the feudal Monarchs convoked for deliberation baronial assemblies, consisting only of Bishops, mitred Abbots, and the principal Nobles. Such were the English Parliaments under the first Anglo-Norman kings; and it was not till the middle of the thirteenth century the Commons came

to form a part of the Legislature. It was at this very time—that is to say, in the period which elapsed from the close of the twelfth to the middle of the fourteenth century—the Third Estate was called to sit in the Cortes of Spain and of Portugal, in the States-General of France, and in the Diets of Germany. The Commons were not summoned to the Legislature in virtue of the false doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, or of any other pretended natural right, but from a high sense of political congruity and expedience. The Commonalty had, at the time I speak of, acquired such an amount of intelligence and wealth as fully qualified it to take part in legislation, and to defend in the councils of the State its own rights, as well as to promote the general interests of society. Like the young man I spoke of, just now, the Third Estate, in most European countries, had at that period attained its majority, was capable of conducting business, and advising its sovereign on important affairs. By their numbers, activity, energy, talents, commercial and industrial wealth, the Commons push the State on in the career of useful enterprise, material well-being, literary and scientific exertion, legal improvements, and administrative reform. They furnish the most numerous members to the priesthood, and passing, from time to time, into the ranks of the Nobility, they renovate, by their riches and talents, its moral and material force.

Thus are all these orders, especially when united in

the communion of Catholic faith, bound up with each other, and all in their several spheres aid each other, and promote the interests of the common weal.

5. Lastly, I have to speak of Municipal Corporations. The Municipality, whether it conducts the local affairs of the city or of the town-land, is a necessary complement to the Christian State. The Municipality may be defined a Corporation, whose members are elected by the citizens or inhabitants of a district for conducting the local administration of a city or of a town-land, and for levying to that effect local taxes.

These admirable institutions initiate the people in the conduct of affairs, develop their intelligence, and further their material well-being. When citizens are debarred from voting for town-councillors, who have only to deliberate on local concerns of a subordinate, material nature, how can they be qualified to elect representatives for the Legislature, where the most delicate, as well as most important, questions of state are to be discussed? Hence the hostility which, as we shall see, the Revolutionists in Europe have ever evinced for Municipal Corporations. In the first place, they wish the people to be kept in utter ignorance of their affairs—in a state of perpetual pupillage, and so to become mere passive instruments in their hands. Secondly, where central administrative boards supersede free municipal corporations, these revolutionists know full well that when, through any intrigues, they shall

be raised to office, it will be in their power to concentrate in their own hands the entire concerns, great and small, of a people. Lastly, these foes of society know, that where local corporations, whether in town or country, subsist, there all the natural legitimate social influences are sure to prevail. And those natural legitimate social influences are rank, property, education, talent, public virtue, civil magistracy, and sacerdotal power ; but these are precisely the things which the Revolution instinctively dreads and detests. Hence the system of bureaucratic centralization, so fatally introduced into France by Louis XIV., was one of the political causes which prepared the way for the Revolution of 1789. And its fearful development under the first Napoleon, (since but partially modified), serves to prolong the political insecurity of France ; and to leave her at the mercy of any rebellious faction, or of any military adventurer, that may happen to gain possession of the capital.

Let us now turn to the apex of the political edifice—the King.

Royalty, as we have seen, is the great bond of union—the great principle of cohesion between the different orders of a State, and sometimes even between the different races composing an empire. But to fulfil the very purpose of its institution, the Royal power must be real and effective. In the mediæval monarchy under consideration, the Sovereign could not levy a tax, nor pass a law, without the con-

currence of the three estates. But he was no *roi fainéant*; he could, and did, exercise his veto freely; and extensive landed possessions insured him great independence. He could not, of course, capriciously run counter to the strong determination of the states; for even in the most absolute Monarchies, the King is often obliged to defer to the advice of his privy council. In all society, domestic or political, mutual concessions must be made, if concord is to be preserved. All I maintain is, that in matters of great importance, the royal conscience could not be rudely violated; and that for two reasons. First, the odious, tyrannical doctrine of Parliamentary omnipotence was unknown. The King had his rights; the Clergy their rights, temporal as well as spiritual; the Aristocracy their rights; the Commonalty their rights;—and these were all equally inviolable; and the action of the Legislature was circumscribed by them.

Secondly, there was every moral probability, that a law sanctioned by the majority of the Clergy, as well as of the Nobility and of the Commons, would not be repugnant to the maxims of Religion, or to the dictates of natural equity. Besides, the King, in a case of conscientious doubt, could always appeal to an authority recognized by all—that of the Sovereign Pontiff.

Let me illustrate this doctrine by an occurrence in our own times.

In the year 1828, Charles X., King of France, was, in despite of his strongly expressed repugnance, forced

by his Ministry, and by a majority in the Chamber of Deputies, to suppress about ten or twelve Jesuit colleges, (which, with few exceptions, were the only places of Catholic education in France,) as also to limit the number of clerical students in the various seminaries of France. The scandalous ordinances which, while they violated the royal conscience, trampled under foot all ecclesiastical freedom, and, by securing a monopoly to the impious State colleges, carried desolation into the bosom of Christian families, were, with one deplorable exception, protested against by the whole Episcopate of France. Before he signed these ordinances, the King, in a state of great mental anguish, privately summoned to his palace at Saint Cloud a certain number of Prelates, and took their advice on this important matter.* Their opinion was, that, under the gravity of the circumstances, and in order to obviate greater dangers to religion and to the State, the Monarch might affix his signature to the decrees in question. With much reluctance, King Charles X. followed this advice; but, of course, he resolved to dismiss on the first occasion the obnoxious Cabinet. And when, in the following year, the Chamber of Deputies offered so strenuous an opposition to the new ministry of Prince Polignac, it was in all probability the dread of a recurrence of the like tyranny over the royal conscience, as well as over Catholic France, that induced the King to resort to the *coup d'état* of

* This fact I learned on the best authority.

1830. And if ever the Charter of 1814 should be restored in France, unless the rights, spiritual and temporal, of the Clergy, as well as the prerogatives of the Crown, and the liberties of the several orders of the State be placed beyond legislative control, the like collisions, and the like disasters, as in 1830, will assuredly recur. The Catholic Church does not permit a King, in cases of vital importance, to surrender his personality, and as it were, to delegate his conscience to a Parliamentary majority, or to what are called responsible Ministers.

To return to my subject:—I have now described the temperate, well-balanced Monarchy, which had grown up under the shelter of the Catholic Church.

This Monarchy, like the general civilization of the Middle age, never reached its perfection. The Middle age was the youth, the marvellous youth of Christendom, and hence, except in some extraordinary cases, it did not attain to maturity. The Reformation, prepared by disastrous events, came to interrupt the glorious work, which under the influence of Christianity, had been so far advanced. Not that many parts of civil polity—which, as we have seen, has its principles of *natural*, as well as of *supernatural* growth—did not go on improving, even after that event, which shook society, as well as the human mind, to its centre. But the political harmony (and it is only of the political Constitution I am here speaking)—the political harmony was destroyed by the doctrines of the

Reformation, and by the civil wars it engendered. And not only in Protestant, but indirectly even in Catholic countries, this destructive influence was apparent. And those doctrines led either to civil despotism, or to anarchy, or to an alternation of the two. By overthrowing in many countries the Hierarchy, and thereby, on one hand, unduly extending regal power, and on the other, by encouraging popular insubordination, Protestantism mostly destroyed the old temperate Monarchy.

In England, though the Anglican Church fell under the ecclesiastical domination of the Crown, and though her divines frequently taught most slavish doctrines respecting the civil power ; yet was Episcopacy (and that as a Divine institution) still retained ; and many Catholic doctrines and traditions preserved, which the Reformation had in other lands swept away. Thus the old mediæval Constitution could be upheld ; and it is remarkable that even under the iron despotism of the Tudors, and amid the arbitrary innovations of the Stuarts, and their struggles with anarchic factions, the forms of that Constitution (except in the short interval of the Commonwealth) were kept intact. In the contests of the seventeenth century, the Cavaliers maintained, mixed with exaggeration, great political truths ; and their opponents, the Roundheads, too, with enormous errors, had often a right instinct of the truth.

Such was the state of things when James II. came

to the throne. By a series of the most rash, unwise acts, this misguided, though well-meaning prince compromised the noblest of causes—the cause of Catholicism, of Monarchy, and of the people of this country. This intemperate zeal, while it forfeited the attachment of his Protestant adherents, at the outset of his reign so numerous and so powerful, called forth the remonstrances of the Sovereign Pontiff, and of his most zealous Catholic supporters at home and abroad. The result of his infatuated policy was the Revolution of 1688. This Revolution, so disastrous to Catholicism, so disastrous to Ireland, but which the concessions made by James at the eleventh hour ought to have averted, partook in England of a defensive and conservative character. From this Revolution sprang the Constitution of 1688, which was a modification of the mediæval Monarchy, and which in the then circumstances of Protestant England, was, perhaps, the best that could have been adopted.

The spiritual authority of the English Hierarchy had been undermined, and its temporal power in consequence weakened, by the religious Revolution of the sixteenth century. The royal power which that revolution had for two centuries rendered more or less despotic, was now by the anti-monarchical reaction provoked by the rash policy of James, reduced within the narrowest limits. Thus were the two main pillars of the State shaken

in their foundations, and made to swerve from their perpendicular. When in any machine screws have become loose, others must be tightened ; and hence it became necessary, in order to save the empire from a popular anarchy, to strengthen in the House of Commons the power of the Aristocracy, as well as of the Crown. A close community of interests, opinions, feelings, and sympathies between the Upper and the Lower House became henceforth a matter of vital importance.* If we are to live under a *mixed Monarchy*, then the House of Commons, which, as all admit, had attained to a great preponderance, must needs be of a *mixed composition* ; that is to say, the Crown, the Clergy, and the Aristocracy must have a large influence in the election of its members. Otherwise the balance of the Constitution would be virtually destroyed. That Constitution of 1688, indeed, did not respond to the high ideal which Christianity had traced out to the nations of the Middle age. Had the Reformation of the sixteenth century not taken place, then the old Constitution would have been harmoniously developed. The progress of civilization would have multiplied the intermediate gradations between the ranks, which in the Middle age were more widely separated. We should have beheld a paternal Royalty, limited indeed, but more independent in its action ; a chivalric Nobility, striking its roots far into the past,

* See note in the Appendix.

and ever receiving withal new sap from the classes below ; a stirring, energetic middle class ; a loyal, devoted peasantry ; a Clergy taking its members from all orders of society, and fulfilling the function of mediator between them ; a literate class acted on by the priesthood, and reacting on it in turn, in the same way as the aristocratic and the commercial classes mutually aid and support each other ; and lastly, the Catholic Religion, controlling and harmonizing all those relations, and, to use the words of the poet,

*"Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things in beauty."*

In bringing to a close these remarks on the organization of States, it is fitting to observe that the arguments, illustrations, and individual views put forth in support of the great social principles here defended, must be left to each one's judgment. *But such is not the case with most of the social principles themselves.* One class of these truths are based on Divine Revelation and on the infallible judgments of the Church ; another class on the consentient wisdom of all ages and of all countries. One set of principles possesses Divine authority ; the other set the highest amount of human probability. The former every Catholic Christian is bound to admit ; the latter a wise man cannot, with any consistency, reject.

These observations I will illustrate by a few examples.

That Christian Marriage is one, indissoluble, and

sacramental; that the right to educate children belongs to the parents, and not to the State; that education must be united with religion; that slavery, whether domestic or predial, is repugnant to the spirit, but not to the precepts, of the Christian religion; that its gradual abolition should be promoted; that property, coeval as it is with domestic society, is not the creature of the State, and, though subject to its regulations, cannot be violated by it; that, under the Christian dispensation, the spiritual and the temporal powers have each their distinct rights and distinct spheres of jurisdiction; that the Church must not be subordinated to the State, as the Anglicans and the Erastians hold; nor the State merged in the Church, as the early Calvinists claimed; nor the Church, though ever distinct, be yet separated and divided from the State, as some Catholic innovators (with good intentions) have proposed;* that the Civil Power is of Divine origin; that rebellion is, consequently, a damnable crime; that Church property has a character doubly sacred; that the Civil Government is bound by all just means to promote the religious and moral, as well as the material, interests of its subjects; that the abuse of the freedom of the press is a great evil; that it is the duty of the individual citizen to submit to laws and institutions which he may not abstractedly

* This opinion, as we have seen, has been censured in the Papal Encyclicals, *Mirari vos* and *Quantà curà*, accepted by the whole Church.

approve of ; that the legitimacy of a ruler does not depend on identity of race and creed with his subjects ; that national independence is a sacred right, but that, where high moral and social interests are at stake, cases may occur where foreign intervention is a right equally sacred ; that all secret societies, whether bound by oaths or no—whether directed against the Church or against the State, or against both—are condemned by the Church :—these, among others, are principles which, resting on Scripture, Tradition, or on solemn judgments of the Holy See, claim the adhesion of the Catholic Christian.

But, as I have said, there is another order of political principles which are not binding on his conscience.

That all Political Constitutions destined to live are not struck off at a single cast, but are the growth of time ; that for great States, Monarchy is far more conducive to order and to freedom than the Republic ; that Nobility is, except in small, rural cantons, absolutely necessary for all governments, whether Monarchical or Republican ; that Municipal Corporations better promote the freedom and well-being of a people than the system of bureaucratic centralization ; that the constitution of the Three Estates, embodying, protecting, and calling forth, as it does, all the faculties, energies, interests, and aspirations of a people, is a more stable as well as freer form of polity than absolute Monarchy : these are principles which strongly

commend themselves to the acceptance of a wise man ; for they are founded on the practice and experience of mankind, and are supported by a consensus of the greatest law-givers, statesmen, philosophers, and publicists of modern, and on many points, even of ancient times.

Both classes of truths, though resting on different foundations, have a mutual congruity and a mutual consonance, and render each other more complete and perfect. Hence a Catholic, obliged in conscience to hold to one set of principles, naturally falls into the other. For he is not satisfied with being only orthodox ;—he strives to be prudent also ; and his Religion of itself inspires a spirit of sobriety and wisdom, and imparts a wonderful insight into human affairs. Hence, on the fundamental points of policy here defended, we find among Catholic publicists in Catholic countries (except in certain special abnormal cases) a striking conformity of views. These are truths as immutable as the fixed stars in the firmament ; and time, instead of weakening, serves only to confirm them.

On the application of these fundamental principles, however, to particular cases, as well as on the minor points of policy, there will, of course, be among Catholics the most devoted to their Church and to social order, differences of opinion. And national manners, habits, interests, laws, and institutions, will not fail to engender other divergences of sentiment.

Here this dissertation on political philosophy, which occupied the latter portion of the last Lecture, and the first part of the present, has reached its close.

I have endeavoured, according to my humble ability, to find a *scientific* basis for that *practical wisdom* which is so characteristic of the great writer whose career I am tracing. I have sought the "*ultima ratio philosophica*" for those political doctrines and political institutions which Burke rested on the common sense and the common experience of mankind.

I have to apologize for having so long detained you on this abstract disquisition; and as I have now brought you down to the Constitution of 1688, of which our author is the most luminous expositor, I naturally pass to an analysis of his views on the French Revolution, which the preceding dissertation was designed to illustrate and enforce.

Let us take a rapid review of the causes, moral and political, that produced this great catastrophe. While Burke was warning the British people against rash, democratic innovations upon their Constitution, a mighty revolution was on the eve of bursting out in a neighbouring country. That revolution was henceforth to engage his most anxious attention.

The fearful conflagration which now desolated France, had been foreseen by not a few discerning spirits, and did not take our illustrious publicist unawares; for he had many years before beheld the train prepared. The phenomenon, which, like a por-

tentous meteor, filled the nations with dismay, had its rise in a remote past ; and since the Reformation, to which its origin can be traced, no event was destined to give so violent a concussion to European thought, and to European society.

To confine myself to the more efficient causes of this great social convulsion in France, I may mention the three principal ones. They were—first, the political changes introduced by Cardinal Richelieu and Louis XIV. into the Constitution, as well as those encroachments on ecclesiastical jurisdiction which followed upon them ; next, the moral corruption which the depraved Court of the Regent, Philip, Duke of Orleans, spread among the Nobles ; and lastly, the irreligion, with which in the long and scandalous reign of Louis XV., the higher and literate classes became infected.

The Absolutism founded by Richelieu, and completed by Louis XIV., as it displaced Nobility—that central institution of society—helped to disorganize the State. The States-General were indefinitely suspended ; the States-Provincial in many places suppressed, and in others, abridged of their rights ; the power of the Nobles was superseded by that of Government officials, and bureaucratic centralization gradually introduced. Thus deprived of local influence, as well as of political power, the Nobles abandoned their country seats, allured by the dangerous attractions of the Court. By this fatal policy, not only

were the rights of an order, which is one of the strongest bulwarks of popular freedom, as well as of Regal prerogative, recklessly sacrificed ; but the legitimate influences of property, and property itself, were undermined. An Aristocracy that ceases to exercise political power loses its significance in the eyes of the people, and with the loss of political power, it is apt to fall into sloth, and into the evils which beset sloth.

2. Though there was much scandal at the Court of Louis XIV., yet, on the whole, Religion was held in the utmost reverence, and the gravity of ancient manners was maintained.

But under the Regency of Philip, Duke of Orleans, a blow was inflicted on the morality of the high Noblesse, from which it never rallied. The precepts of Religion were openly derided ; and debauchery was carried to the last degree of cynicism. While vice held its triumphant orgies at a depraved Court, the mania of financial speculation seized on thousands in the upper and middle classes, and carried ruin into many a household.

3. This moral corruption under the Regency was the natural prelude to the systematic irreligion, which in the long and disastrous reign that succeeded, became so widely prevalent. The impious writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, D'Alembert, Diderot, and the other Encyclopædists, found a soil unhappily too well prepared for the noxious seed. The most formidable

phalanx of talent ever arrayed against Christianity now assailed the Church of France. The dissolute members of the Court and of the high aristocracy blindly fostered the dragon which was to destroy their order and the Monarchy itself. Many among the moneyed men, as well as the Literati, and a certain number of Ecclesiastics, became also infected with the prevailing epidemic.

But how was the Church of France prepared to encounter these dreadful assaults of impiety? That Church in the eighteenth century, indeed, could no longer boast of the great luminaries of genius and learning that had adorned the reign of Louis XIV. The suspension, or at least the weakening, of representative institutions in France, had, of course, deprived the Clergy of much of their political power; but that power was one of the outworks of their spiritual authority. Even under Louis XIV., the encroachments of the Court, facilitated by absolutism, had cramped ecclesiastical jurisdiction and enervated ecclesiastical discipline; and in the course of the eighteenth century, the Parliaments, especially that of Paris, strongly imbued with Jansenistic prejudices, often exercised over the Church the most revolting tyranny. The Jansenistic sect, which so long agitated France, weakened the forces and distracted the attention of her priesthood in their conflict with unbelief.

The profligate Court of Louis XV. gave no encouragement to Catholic literature, or to ecclesiastic

learning ; nay, the worthless mistresses of the Monarch, De Pompadour, was the avowed patroness of the impious Literati. In the nomination to ecclesiastical dignities, also, high birth and family interests were more frequently regarded than the claims of piety and learning. Yet the Clergy, secular and regular, still possessed men of solid talents and great acquirements ; they produced distinguished apologists, like Bullet, Bergier, Guénée, and others, who worthily upheld the ancient reputation of the Church of France. The suppression of the Society of Jesus was a heavy blow to religion, and especially to Catholic education. The increase of bad colleges, and the spread of the Masonic and other secret societies, co-operated with the irreligious press in accelerating a great moral and social catastrophe.

The Jansenists, who in the course of the eighteenth century had become more and more fanatical, as well as the dissolute members of the Clergy, fell at the outbreak of the Revolution into the schism, called "*Constitutional* ;" and thence many of them plunged into the abyss of utter unbelief. This Revolution was like the fan, which winnowed the chaff from the wheat. The immense majority of the Clergy, as we shall see, whether of the first or of the second order, whether secular or regular, were true to the Church ; and rather than transgress her laws, or betray their conscience, they suffered spoliation, imprisonment, exile, or death.

Now as to the Third Estate. The suspension of the States-General, and the suppression of the States-Provincial in many portions of the kingdom, closed against this order a legitimate sphere of activity, and deprived it of its fair political influence; and left it, thus devoid of political experience and capacity, a ready prey to crafty demagogues. No longer united with the Clergy and the Nobles in the work of legislation, or in affairs of civil administration, the Third Estate began to be estranged from the other two orders, and even to entertain feelings of jealousy in their regard. The fact that certain taxes, like the Taille, fell exclusively on their body, was another source of irritation. When the wealthier members of this class caught from the impious Literati the infection of unbelief, irreligion inspired them with revolutionary sentiments and revolutionary projects, against which natural instincts and position were calculated to guard the Aristocracy.

The Parliaments, which were the King's Courts for the administration of justice, had, among other duties, to see that the Royal ordinances and decrees were couched in the fitting technical language. From the form of these decrees, they passed to an examination of their subject-matter, and began to exercise, in regard to Royal mandates, the right of remonstrance. In the absence of the States-General, they often checked the encroachments of arbitrary power, and thus rendered important services to public liberty.

But they often, likewise, displayed a factious opposition towards the Court, and carried into the discussion of public affairs the spirit of contentiousness, and of narrow-minded subtlety, so characteristic of lawyers. In ecclesiastical matters, too, they had latterly become, as I have shown, too often the tools of the Janseuist sect, and thus exercised over the Church a most oppressive domination. Thus, in a political point of view, the Parliaments of France were very inadequate substitutes for her ancient States-General.

But in their judicial capacity these tribunals were mostly exemplary ; their administration of justice was unfulled, and in a corrupt age their members preserved the gravity of ancient manners, and a certain dignity of character.

Now, to speak of the humbler classes ;—the absence of the Nobles from their estates exposed the peasantry to hardships and exactions, from which they would have been otherwise exempted. And, on the other hand, the lavish expenditure which residence in the capital and attendance at a luxurious Court of necessity entailed, led to embarrassments in landed property, and consequently to a deterioration of the well-being of the tenantry.

Such was the state of society, and such the condition of its several classes in France, when the Revolution of 1789 broke out.

The very first symptoms of this great social crisis excited in the mind of Burke the gravest misgivings.

"Reflections on the French Revolution"



And as every month passed by those symptoms grew more and more alarming, and the dangerous character of the malady more apparent. After several months' close observation, our illustrious publicist sat down to record his solemn judgment on the portentous social phenomena passing under his eyes. This judgment was the work entitled, "*Reflections on the French Revolution*;"—a work which, appearing on the first November, 1790, constitutes an era in the history of political science.

Of this very remarkable book I will now endeavour to give an analysis, interweaving therein occasionally views and illustrations of my own. The book itself was suggested by the letter of a young French gentleman, who demanded Burke's opinion as to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. The author begins his work with denouncing the seditious societies, then recently set up in London, with a view to propagate the principles of the French Revolution, and in which the Unitarian ministers, Dr. Priestley and Dr. Price, took a prominent part. Next he shows that the English Revolution of 1688, which these men represented as the model of the French, was, in its nature, object, and tendencies, radically and essentially different; that it was a conservative, and not, like the latter, a destructive Revolution; in a word, that it was begun and achieved in defence of the religion, constitution, laws, and liberties of the nation. The greatest change was in the succession to the

throne ; but here, the author observes, there was no further deviation from the established order of things than the interests of the Anglican Church imperiously demanded. There was, however, I think, a greater change in the royal prerogatives than Burke seems disposed to allow.

Then he points out the gradual growth of the British Constitution from the earliest times to his own—its adaptation to the wants of every age, and the cautious, yet timely reform of abuses. The folly and criminality of the French Revolutionists in destroying, instead of repairing, their old Constitution of the Three Estates, that was still partially preserved, though since the administration of Cardinal Richelieu, sadly dilapidated, are afterwards shown. “Your privileges,” he says, “though discontinued, were not lost to memory. Your Constitution, it is true, whilst you were out of possession, suffered waste and dilapidation ; but you possessed in some parts the walls, and in all, the foundations, of a noble and venerable castle. You might have repaired those walls ; you might have built on those old foundations. Your Constitution was suspended before it was perfected ; but you had the elements of a Constitution very nearly as good as could be wished. In your old States you possessed that variety of parts corresponding with the various descriptions of which your community was happily composed ; you had all that combination, and all that opposition of interests ; you had that action and coun-

teraction, which in the natural and in the political world, from the reciprocal struggle of discordant powers, draws out the harmony of the universe." *

What an admirable tribute to that Constitution of the Three Estates, so little understood by the greater part of English writers! They speak of the British Constitution as something *sui generis*;—as something perfectly unique and unprecedented;—as the admiration and envy of surrounding nations;—and forget, that like their so-called incomparable Liturgy, which is but a mutilated version of the Roman Missal, that Constitution is only an imperfect transcript of the mediæval Government of the three Orders. When, on a late occasion, I called this Constitution, which had grown up under the shelter of the Church from the twelfth down to the commencement of the eighteenth century, and had flourished more or less in all the countries from Portugal to the Scandinavian North, "the best form of representative Government," I was rebuked by an English Protestant critic† for having given utterance to a bold assertion. And what was the ground of his objection? Why, that English and Irish Catholics had in the political struggles of the seventeenth century sided with the Stuarts! As if, forsooth, the conduct of a section of Catholics in one age could counterbalance the general action of the Church for many centuries and in many countries!

* "Reflections on the French Revolution," p. 308.

† The London *Examiner*.

As if the Catholics of these countries were responsible for the fact, that the Protestant Reformation had in many respects changed the British Constitution from a limited to an arbitrary monarchy ! As if the instinct of self-preservation did not force them to rally round a Court which gave them some sort of protection, however weak and treacherous, and to resist those fanatics who were thirsting for their blood ! As if the government of their legitimate king, however faulty, and to which, moreover, the duties of conscience bound them, were not infinitely preferable to the gloomy tyranny of the Roundheads, and the odious military despotism of Cromwell ! And when at the accession of James II. the Catholics of England and Ireland, who, with a slight intermission, had been for one hundred and thirty years so bitterly persecuted, obtained some political influence ; they, for the most part, exerted all their energies to dissuade that misguided monarch from those arbitrary measures which brought about his ruin ; and in these counsels they were backed by the reigning Pontiff, Pope Innocent XI.

Trusting you will pardon this digression, I resume the analysis of the "Reflections." The elements of which the new Constituent Assembly were composed are now examined by the author. The condition, the education, and the professions of its various members disqualified them, as he shows, for the arduous task of legislation, and more especially at such a momentous crisis. The deputies of the Third Estate, who had now

usurped supreme power, were for the most part either obscure provincial lawyers, attorneys, and notaries, or physicians of small practice, or stock-jobbers, together with a few small farmers, incapable of writing their names. Such members would have been dangerous enough, had they even been counterbalanced by the other two orders—the Clergy and the Nobles. But, unfortunately, this Third Estate, which, contrary to all precedent, the King had most imprudently permitted to consist of six hundred deputies, (double the usual number,) was thus rendered equal to the representatives of the other two orders. This lower House, already so unduly augmented at the elections, now by intrigue and violence absorbed into itself the other two Estates of the realm. Those ecclesiastics, who treacherously joined the Tiers-Etat, were obscure country-curates, totally unacquainted with affairs of State, and who had been elected in preference to the more learned, experienced, and dignified members of their body. That men so devoid of all political experience should in such difficult times have become candidates for a seat in the Legislature, proved that they were not remarkable for over-delicacy of conscience. In like manner, the Nobles, who by joining the Tiers-Etat betrayed their order, were either fanatical disciples of Rousseau, or selfish, profligate men, who hoped, by pandering to popular passions, to build up their fortunes on the ruin of their compeers.

Burke now proceeds to point out the importance

and advantages of nobility to a State, and shows how it protects the smaller class of proprietors, and serves as a barrier against regal despotism on the one hand, and popular licence on the other. After proving that nobility is founded in the very instincts of our nature (for equality of conditions is an absurd chimera,) the author observes that some decent, regulated pre-eminence, some preference, (not exclusive appropriation,) given to birth, is neither unnatural, nor unjust, nor impolitic. And this principle he makes applicable to the second branch of the Legislature, or the House of Commons in England.

He then examines the new municipal institutions which the Revolution had given to France. The eighty-three new Municipal Republics, with nothing but a mock Royalty to hold them together, will, as he foretells, be involved in incessant mutual conflicts; and that of Paris will strive to bring the others under its domination. This prediction was fully verified, when the Legislature, overruled by the clubs of the capital, sent its commissioners to domineer over the provincial Municipalities; and when Napoleon made that city the central seat of an all-absorbing Bureaucracy.

The author now proceeds to refute various sophistical theories put forth by one of the leaders of the Revolution Society in London, the Unitarian minister, Dr. Price. Starting from the false idea so prevalent in the eighteenth century, that man had

originally certain natural, absolute rights, which he surrendered on entering into civil society, Burke observes that from the moment "any artificial, positive limitation upon those rights be suffered, the whole organization of government becomes a consideration of convenience." But a truer theory shows that man ever existed in society, whether domestic or civil, and that his rights are not absolute, but relative. Those rights, then, being relative, the whole framework of society, though founded on the basis of eternal, immutable justice, has for its object to make individual rights subordinate to the general welfare. Society, by making man respect the liberty of his fellows, protects in turn his own freedom. And it is remarkable that Burke, though starting from a wrong principle, arrives at the same just conclusions we have announced. The inequality of conditions is a consequence of the Fall, and this, therefore, in the social state involves an inequality of political rights and privileges. The nature of man, as the author justly observes, is intricate; "the objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity; and therefore no simple disposition or direction of power can be suitable either to man's nature, or to the quality of his affairs." By the light of these principles, he exposes the folly, injustice, and perniciousness of the new constitution which the French Assembly had elaborated. It was thus the immense practical sagacity of Burke corrected the consequences of a metaphysical error, which he held in common

with his age, to wit, that civil society is an *artificial*, and not a *natural* condition of men.

The author now goes on to speak of the hapless condition to which the Revolution had reduced Royalty. Here, in the glowing colours of a magnificent eloquence, he depicts the humiliations, the sorrows, the sufferings, the protracted agony of the unfortunate King and Queen of France in that long procession from Versailles to Paris, marked, as it was, by every species of contumely and atrocious outrage. There he shows how the Constitution seemed to retain a phantom of Royalty, only to load it with insult and mockery. Nor did it fare better with the National Assembly itself, whose sittings were perpetually disturbed by the cheers or the hootings of an infuriated rabble in the galleries.

Burke then traces the misfortunes of France to the decline of the Christian religion, as well as to the decay of that spirit of chivalry which was its offspring. He proves how, under the combined influence of both, all civilization—order, freedom, laws, letters, arts, and science, agriculture, commerce, and manufactures—had attained to a wonderful degree of perfection.

He proceeds to assail the godless Literati of France, and shows why they were more dangerous to Church and State than the English deists of the seventeenth century. He next indulges in admirable reflections on the union of Church and State, and proves how

motives of high policy and social utility, as well as the spiritual interests of mankind, recommend such an alliance. Though he applies many of his observations to the Protestant Establishment in England, yet they hold equally good of the Catholic Church in a Catholic State. No part of this essay evinces a more solid and profound philosophy. Popular government, too, as is shown, needs more than any other, the permeating influences of religion; for with the responsibilities of power must be linked the consciousness of a higher retributive justice. The dignity of religion—the interests of education and learning—the offices of Christian charity—the stability and prosperity of the Commonwealth—all render the independent endowment of the clergy and their political influence an object of imperious need.

Having shown at considerable length the advantages accruing from the union of Church and State, Burke stigmatizes with great vigour the confiscation of ecclesiastical property in France, as fraught with injustice and cruelty, and demolishes all the flimsy pretexts for this sacrilegious spoliation. He analyzes the motives of its authors, and traces them to two causes—the jealousy, on one hand, which the moneyed class entertained of the Noblesse, whose clerical members then generally filled the bishoprics and commendatory abbeys,—and the machinations of the godless Literati on the other.

The character and the designs of the latter class are

are sketched in brief, but vigorous traits. Here the author reaches the heart of the disease; and all through his work, he points out irreligion as the one animating principle of the whole revolutionary scheme. Had his object been to describe the causes of the Revolution, he would have laid open with much greater fulness the destructive doctrines and the detestable projects of the sophists of the eighteenth century. But his business was with the dreadful occurrences passing under his eye—their specific character—their probable consequences—and the policy best fitted to counteract them. Incidentally, indeed, and as occasion requires, he traces back those events to their primary causes.

Among these he fails not to notice the profligacy and prodigality of the Court of Louis XV., and the libertinism of many among the high Noblesse, and “the encouragement (to use his own words) they gave to the licentious philosophy which brought about their ruin.”

How Janfenism agitated, too, the Church of France, and distracted and hampered the orthodox clergy in their contest with unbelief, was one of those causes of the great catastrophe, not likely to strike a Protestant statesman. In the same manner, the encroachments of the Court on ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the violent oppression exercised by the Paris Parliament over the clergy, could not inspire an Anglican Protestant with the same horror as it would a Catholic. Yet Burke

testified his disapproval of the conduct of the Parliament in certain cases not specified, and stigmatized later the schismatical innovations of the Emperor Joseph II., as *Jacobinical*. From the first, he held up to scorn and detestation the religious mockery called the “Civil Constitution of the Clergy,” and foretold, with admirable sagacity, that it was but the prelude to the utter abolition of all religion.

The monstrous outrage offered to the plundered Church of France, whereby the election of her prelates and priests was abandoned to a motley crowd of Protestants, Jews, and infidels, mixed up with the faithful, did not escape the lash of his invective. The most atrocious act in this sacrilegious farce was a radical change, such as popular election, in the discipline of the French Church without the sanction of the Sovereign Pontiff; nay, more, with the open denial of his inherent, inalienable right of episcopal institution. I say *inherent right*, for though that right was differently exercised in different times and in different places; and though, for example, in the old Greek Church, where the Patriarchs had such enormous privileges, they instituted the Archbishops and Bishops within their respective jurisdictions; yet they themselves were ever instituted by the Holy See. Thus, *directly, or indirectly*, that See has been the fountain of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in every age, and in every portion of the Church of Christ. This outrage against Catholic Unity, committed by the French Revolution

in the very outset of its career, and which was but the natural prelude to all the impieties and abominations that ensued, could not, of course, be as distinctly perceptible to a Protestant as it is to a Catholic mind. Yet in these matters, the vision of Burke was as clear as could well be that of one sitting outside the Divine illumination of the Church.

Changing here somewhat the order of the work, I shall proceed to notice the author's vindication of the moral character of the French Clergy. On a former occasion I spoke of his visit to France, and of his opportunities for acquiring a knowledge of the state of society in that country, and of the manners and habits of the Clergy and the Noblesse. "On examination," he says, "I found the clergy, in general, persons of moderate minds and decorous manners; I include the seculars and the regulars of both sexes. I had not the good fortune to know a great many of the parochial clergy; but in general I received a perfectly good account of their morals, and of their attention to their duties. With some of the higher clergy I had a personal acquaintance, and of the rest of that class a very good means of information." After noticing the refinement of their manners, and the liberality of their temper, and pointing to examples among them of extraordinary candour and learning which happened to come under his observation, he concludes by saying "they were a rather superior class of men, among whom you would not be surprized

to find a Fénélon."* He further observes, that out of the one hundred and twenty bishops that before the Revolution ruled the Church of France, "a few were men of eminent sanctity, and charity without limit." He is certain that, when he was in France, the number of vicious prelates was not great; and he was informed that, in his nominations to high ecclesiastical dignities, Louis XVI. was more attentive to the claims of virtue than his immediate predecessor.

A number of literary men, as I had formerly occasion to observe, anxious to gain admission into high society, took the tonsure and the clerical garb, and assumed the title of Abbé,† while, by their irreligious principles and profligate conduct, they brought discredit on an order with which they were but outwardly connected. The disorderly members of the priesthood, too, who had hitherto lurked in the crowded capital, and in the large provincial towns, came out of their retreats, as the tocsin of the Revolution sounded. These now, together with the fanatical Jansenists, who had so long disturbed the Church, went to swell the ranks of the new schismatical congregation, called the "Constitutional Church."‡

* P. 416-17.

† See my First Course of Lectures on some portions of Ancient and Modern History. Lecture V. Dolman, 1858.

‡ Out of one hundred and thirty-five prelates, *four only* took the oath to the schismatical Constitution. And out of sixty thousand curates and vicars, there were *fifty thousand* who remained true to the Holy See, to their Church, and to their conscience.

And now with respect to the French nobility;—Burke observes, that they were for the most part composed of men of high spirit, and of a delicate sense of honour, tolerably well bred, very officious, humane, and hospitable; in their conversation frank and open, with a good military tone, and reasonably tinctured with literature. Many, he adds, had pretensions far above this description, but he spoke of those generally met with.

Their behaviour to the inferior classes was, he continues to say, marked by good-nature. Nor, as men of landed estates, had he any fault to find with their conduct, though much to reprehend, and much to wish changed in many of the old tenures.

Then he proceeds to speak of the faults and errors

What admirable self-devotion! Ecclesiastical history does not present a finer page. Yet bigoted or ignorant English Protestant writers, like Earl Russell and others, have censured Burke for holding up this excellent priesthood to the admiration of mankind. Consult “*Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire ecclesiastique du 18^{eme} siecle*,” t. iii. Also “*L’histoire de l’Eglise*,” par M. Rohrbacher, tom. xxviii. Even a fair Protestant, like Mr. Macknight, the biographer of Burke, blames the French Clergy for having let their nation grow up infidels. The numbers of infidels are here grossly exaggerated. Next, though a large number of the high Aristocracy were unbelievers, and the greater part of the Literati, yet the responsibility for this state of things falls not chiefly on the Clergy. In their conflict with unbelief, they were hampered by the encroachments as well as the profligate example of the Court, by the oppressions of the Parliaments, and by the efforts of the Jansenists. The good schools held by the Jesuits were suppressed; and, such was the influence of the infidel party, patronized by courtiers and ministers, that it was difficult for a Catholic to publish a book in defence of his faith.

that were too common among these Nobles ; but his observations apply more especially to that portion of the Aristocracy which resided in the capital, and frequented a corrupt Court. " Habitual dissoluteness of manners," he says, " continued beyond the pardonable period of life, was more common amongst them than it is with us ; and they countenanced too much that licentious philosophy which has helped to bring on their ruin."*

Another source of danger to this class, in the opinion of our great publicist, was the jealous spirit of exclusiveness they evinced towards the Aristocracy of Wealth. Therein, I will venture to say, this exclusiveness arose from the suspension of the States-Constitution, and from the consequent loss of political power by the Nobles. For such a loss an Aristocracy seeks an idle compensation in a rigid, exclusive etiquette, and in the exaggeration of certain social privileges. This was the case during the last two centuries in Spain, and in Germany also. And in proof of what is here asserted, I may allege the authority of M. de Tocqueville, who observes, that in the province of Languedoc, which under the old régime retained to the last its local legislature, there prevailed the frankest and most cordial intercourse between the Clergy, the Noblesse, and the Tiers-Etat. And the reason is obvious : it is in the nature of Parliamentary institutions to bring these classes together, and so to remove mutual jealousy and distrust.

* P. 409.

Now what were the political privileges of these two orders, the Nobles and the Clergy? Here Burke dispelled the gross misconceptions which prevailed in the popular mind of England as to their exemption from all taxation. The two orders were alike subject to the duties on Excise and on Customs, and to all other indirect imposts, which in every country form so considerable an item of the Public Revenue. In direct taxation, the Nobles paid the capitation-tax, and a land-tax called the twentieth penny, which sometimes amounted to three, and even to four shillings in the pound. They were exempted only from the tax called "La Taille," which fell exclusively on non-noble landed proprietors and householders. This, as I formerly showed, was an odious, impolitic privilege, which excited much jealousy and heart-burning in the Tiers-Etat. But this and all other such unwise and useless distinctions, the Noblesse were anxious to surrender; and to this effect they instructed the representatives sent by them to the States-General of 1789.

In the provinces annexed by conquest, the clergy contributed to the public revenue at the same rate as the nobles. In the old hereditary provinces they did not pay the capitation-tax; but they had redeemed themselves at a little more than a million sterling per annum. Though they were exempted from the twentieths; yet they made free gifts to the State, and contracted debts on its account. About a thir-

teenth part of their income went to the support of the public burthens. The Clergy, like the Nobles, long before the year 1789, as well as in their instructions to their representatives at that momentous epoch, expressed their anxiety to be placed on a footing of perfect fiscal equality with the Third Estate.

The yearly income of the Clergy, when the Revolution broke out, was estimated at five millions sterling. The deficit in the public revenue of France was then two millions, two hundred thousand pounds sterling. This deficit the Minister, M. Neckar, declared he could supply, without even having recourse to new imposts. Supposing, as Burke says, his calculations to have been all fallacious, and that the National Assembly by a most oppressive, iniquitous act, had called on the Clergy to fill up the financial void ; this would, doubtless, have been a frightful wrong ; but still it would not have beggared the Church of France. But it was the ruin of the Clergy the Revolutionists meditated ; and this they achieved by a most sweeping confiscation.

Having now set forth the moral character, and the political rights and privileges of the Clergy and of the Nobles, I turn to the general vindication which Burke makes of the old French Monarchy. He asks how a country like France, with such a teeming population, such a flourishing agriculture, so extended a commerce, such various and beautiful products of mechanical skill, such a formidable marine, such magnifi-

cent roads, canals, harbours, and fortifications; a country adorned with all the arts which polish life; which had brought forth such great warriors and statesmen, such a splendid line of profound theologians, philosophers, lawyers, historians, poets, and artists; how such a country, I say, could have been ruled (as fanatical and shallow-minded sophists pretend) by an iron despotism? * He shows that in no country were life and property better protected than in ancient France. And I may add, with respect to personal freedom, that the *lettres de cachet* even in the reign of Louis XV. chiefly affected young Nobles, who for bad conduct, and at the request of their parents, were sent to the Bastille, or Ministers of State, and other public functionaries, that when disgraced, were sometimes ordered by the King to this place of temporary imprisonment. Still this right of arbitrary arrest was an odious abuse, which in 1789 the Clergy and the Nobles, as well as the Third Estate, in their concurrent instructions to their representatives strongly denounced. For this, as for all abuses of a like kind, the true remedy to be found was in the restoration of the old Constitution of the Three Orders.

In the latter part of his Essay, Burke subjects to a most searching analysis the composition of the National Assembly, the radically vicious system of popular election, under which it had been chosen, the nature of the Executive Power, which was still called

* See note in Appendix.

Royalty, the municipal institutions, the new system of judicature, the composition and the discipline of the army, the reciprocal relations of all these establishments, and lastly, the system of financial economy.

After having thus described all the errors, follies, impieties, and crimes of the first actors in the Revolution, the author concludes by foretelling to France the long series of calamities that lay on her path—"the strange varieties of untried being she was doomed to pass through."

This work appeared, as has been said, on the 1st November, 1790. A few days afterwards Windham received it at his country seat in Norfolk; and this distinguished statesman, whom a bitter adversary of Burke's, the late Lord Holland, had falsely represented as having ridiculed it on its first appearance, thus records in his Diary his judgment on the book: "On Thursday, the 4th day of November," he writes, "a material incident happened—the arrival at Felbrigg* of Mr. Burke's pamphlet. Never was there, I suppose, a work so valuable in its kind, or that displayed powers of so extraordinary a nature. It is a work that may be conceived capable of overthrowing the National Assembly, and of turning the stream of opinions throughout Europe. One would think that the author of such a work would be called to the Government of his country by the combined voices of all men in it."†

* Windham's country-seat.

† See extract from the Diary in *Quarterly Review*, vol. xci. p. 227. The Diary has since been published in full.

FOURTH LECTURE.



HE "Reflections on the French Revolution" were followed a few months afterwards by an admirable Supplement—a Letter to a Royalist Member of the National Assembly of France. Here the author depicts with great power the character of Rousseau, and points out the fatal influence of his writings and his example on the education and morals and manners of the French youth of either sex. He shows how insolence and brutality of demeanour, as well as impiety and libertinism, had been engendered by the works of that sophist, and of his compeers,—Voltaire, Helvetius, and others; and then been fostered and promoted by the leaders of the Revolution.

In this Letter, too, we find excellent observations on the old French Monarchy of the Three Estates, and on the points of resemblance and the points of difference between it and the British Constitution.

When Burke had published the "Reflections," and this Supplemental Letter, the first phase of the Re-

volution was nearly completed. In the course of eighteen months what moral havoc, what social ruin, had been achieved! And who must not see that such a state of things was but the prelude to one still more disastrous—that France could not pause in her downward course, and that the first contortions of frenzy must be followed by paroxysms still more violent? Must not, as the event proved, a democratic Assembly, absurdly elected, absurdly composed, unchecked by any Senate whatever, hereditary or for life—uncontrolled by any fundamental laws whatsoever—which disregarded the rights of all corporations, ecclesiastical or lay—which trampled under foot all historical traditions, customs, habits, and connexions—all the local legislatures, and judicatures, and the privileges of provinces and cities—which by laying sacrilegious hands on the authority of the Holy See, and on the discipline, as well as the property of the Church of France, had created a religious schism;—must not such an Assembly have necessarily led to an anarchy? Must not the persecution and the plunder of the priesthood—the systematic dishonour and outrages put upon the Nobility—a licentious press—the domination of sanguinary clubs—a mutinous soldiery—a bankrupt exchequer—a Royalty seemingly retained only for the purposes of mockery; must not, I say, such a state of things, more especially in the then irreligious temper of France, have of necessity brought about universal confusion, spoliation, terror-

ism, and bloodshed? And, consequently, must not the Constituent Assembly, though it might have the merit of removing a certain number of abuses,* have needs prepared the way for the atheistic horrors of the Convention?

The sensation which the "Reflections on the French Revolution" produced, was prodigious. It was the topic of conversation in every circle. Friends meeting each other in the street would say, "Have you read Burke's book?" King George III., who had been so long prejudiced against the author, was delighted with his new production, and according, to Mr. Macknight, said to all who approached his Majesty, "It will do you good; every gentleman should read the book." At a Ministerial dinner given by Pitt at Wimbledon, and at which, among others, Wilberforce, Dundas, and Lord Grenville were present, warm admiration for the work was expressed by Pitt and Wilberforce.† In Burke's own party, Lord John Cavendish, Powis, and, as we have already seen, Windham were enthusiastic admirers of the "Reflections," which they regarded as a faithful exposition of the political creed of Lord Rockingham's old followers. The resident graduates of Oxford expressed, through the medium of Mr.

* When we pull down institutions, we necessarily sweep away the abuses which cling to them. But where is the merit or the utility of such reforms, and where the glory of such reformers?

† See Burke's Correspondence; Wilberforce's Diary; Life of Burke, by Macknight, p. 350; Prior's Life of Burke, pp. 313-15.

Windham, their warm thanks to the author for his great and timely service to the cause of religion, and of society; and the University of Dublin conferred on the most illustrious of her sons the degree of Doctor of Laws. The princes and sovereigns of Germany, King Stanislaus of Poland, and even the Empress of Russia, transmitted to Burke their warm thanks for the services he had rendered to the cause of social order. Pope Pius VI. himself sent by an Irish gentleman an autograph letter to Burke, thanking him for his generous efforts in behalf of English and Irish Catholics, as well as of the French emigrant Clergy, and congratulating him on his admirable work against the French sophists.* Even the unfortunate Louis XVI. relieved the sad hours of his captivity with translating into French the immortal work.† A French translation from the pen of M. Dupont, a young friend of the writer's, and who had first induced Burke to compose the "Reflections," was very successful, and passed through several editions. Even M. Dumont, the Republican friend of Bentham, admitted, ten years afterwards, that that work had perhaps saved Europe from anarchy.

At home the sale of the book was immense. Thirty thousand copies had within a few months issued from the press. This Essay produced a mighty change in the public mind of England, that from ignorance or heedlessness, or from Protestant prejudices, or from a

* See the letter in Appendix.

† See R. Burke's letter in Correspondence, vol. iv.

misdirected sympathy with what passed for freedom, had looked generally with favour on the French Revolution. A year after the publication of this work, three-fourths of the British public had rallied around the standard of religion, social order, and freedom ; for every day's experience proved the author's sagacity, and verified his predictions. A vehement opposition to the principles laid down in the "Reflections" was made by many of the Nonconformists, especially the Unitarians, who embraced with ardour the doctrines, ecclesiastical and political, of the French Revolution ; and lastly, by the avowed Free-thinkers, who naturally coalesced with their brethren on the Continent. In Parliament, the only party that dared to avow sympathy with the anti-Christian and anti-Social tyrants that were then desolating France, were the extreme section of the Whigs, represented by Fox, Sheridan, Erskine, and Mr., afterwards Earl, Grey. They were opposed not only by the whole Tory party, headed by Pitt, but, as we have seen, by the Rockingham Whigs ; while many statesmen of great weight, like the Duke of Portland and Earl Fitzwilliam, not willing yet to break openly with Fox, expressed in private their concurrence in the views of Burke. The Foxite Whigs, as we shall presently see, treated this great statesman in open Parliament with signal discourtesy and ingratitude.

But the hour of retribution was not long delayed. Burke soon saw his adversaries dwindle down to an

insignificant group, shiver for long years on the lonely benches of Opposition, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*, and return home every evening from S. Stephen's Chapel packed in three hackney-coaches !

The extraordinary merit of the "Essay on the French Revolution" fully corresponded to the extent of the sale, and the wonderful influence it exercised on the British and the European mind. For the variety of topics, the fulness of knowledge, the force of the reasoning, the depth of the observations, and the splendour of the eloquence, it may justly be regarded as the author's masterpiece. And though more than seventy years have elapsed since its publication, and the great subject which it treats of has been since so frequently investigated, no English production has even approached it in excellence. It still remains the profoundest, as well as the most eloquent political work in our language. To find the worthy continuators of Burke's political labours, we must repair to France and Catholic Germany, and there behold the great men whom Providence raised up to defend society as well as religion. But these in due time will come under consideration.

But before proceeding further, let us see how strikingly the author's several predictions were fulfilled, and that in a brief space of time. He foretold that "the Civil Constitution of the Clergy" was but a hypocritical, tyrannical device to prepare the way for the triumph of atheism ; that the spoliation of the Clergy

must needs lead to their persecution, banishment, imprisonment, and massacre ; that the dishonour and outrage offered to the Nobility would be the sure prelude to its proscription ; that the contumelious captivity of the King foreshadowed the extinction of Monarchy ; that a fictitious paper-currency, based on sacrilegious robbery, would prove ruinous to agriculture, commerce, and industry, and thereby fatal to the well-being of the humbler classes ; that in despite of the countless municipal republics into which France had been newly divided, Paris, by its clubs, and as the seat of gambling financial speculations, as well as of political plots, would exert a domineering supremacy over the provinces ; that the intrigues which prepared the way for the seizure of the Papal provinces of Avignon and the Venaissin, were but the first symptoms of that spirit of lawless aggression which was to assail the independence of every state in Europe ; and lastly, that an impious, revolutionary fanaticism would give for a time a preternatural energy to the French troops.

Burke's remark, too, that Parliamentary life would serve as a corrective to the frivolity and the vices of the Noblesse, was exemplified under the Restoration ;—for occupation, though not the primary, is yet a subordinate, external aid to virtue. Until I lately reperused this work, I was not aware of the amazing variety of its perceptions, and of the depth of its views.

The fundamental difference of opinion between Burke and his friend Fox on the great question which had now for two years agitated the public mind—a difference which had slightly manifested itself in the preceding Session—now broke out into open and intense hostility. In the preceding Session, Fox had taken occasion to praise the French Constituent Assembly, and commend the mutinous conduct of the French soldiery. Again, on Pitt's introducing a Bill for modifying the Constitution of Canada, in the Session of 1791, Fox renewed his warm encomiums on the French Revolution. Moreover, on the 15th April of the same year, during a discussion on certain negotiations between Russia and the Ottoman Porte, the same orator once more dragged in the subject of the French Revolution, and had the effrontery to call "the new French Constitution the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty, which had been erected on the foundation of human integrity, in any time and in any country."

Monstrous and horrible dictum!—atrocious outrage on the sense and the feelings of the civilized world! Even the Pagan orator, Tully, had he heard such encomiums pronounced in the Roman Senate, on such a contempt for divine and human laws—on such frightful excesses of folly and wickedness, as those exhibited by the Constituent Assembly of France, would surely have exclaimed with indignation—(if I dare put my Latinity into his mouth)—"Proh pudor! Dii immor-

tales ! quis tam atrox, tam impius, tam perditus, hoc immanitatis, dementiæ, sacrilegii monstrum in Senatû Romano laudibus efferre audeat !”

What, then, must have been the anguish of Burke, on hearing in a Christian assembly, and from his friend and colleague, such an eulogy pronounced on such fearful aberrations of folly and crime ! Deeply agitated, he rose to speak, but loud cries of “Question, question,” from Fox’s friends, drowned his voice, and the House immediately proceeded to a division.

The 6th of May following, the Quebec Bill again came under discussion. As soon as the chair was taken, Burke rose, amid the deep silence of the House. He declared that the Declaration of Rights proclaimed by the National Assembly of France was unfitted to be the foundation of a government for the Canadians, or for any other people. He then contrasted the conduct of the American colonists in the War of Independence with that of the Paris citizens in their Revolution ; and was proceeding to recount some excesses of the latter, when he was loudly called to order by a Whig friend. Fox interposed, but so far from playing a conciliatory part, used language the most calculated to irritate his illustrious friend. He said, ironically, that this was a day of privilege, and that every gentleman had a right, with his friend, Mr. Burke, to abuse any government, ancient or modern, as much as he pleased, and in the grossest terms he might think proper to use.

"My right honourable friend," Burke replied, "accuses me of abusing governments in very gross terms. I conceive my right honourable friend means to abuse me in very unqualified terms." He declared that neither friend nor foe would he allow to come between him and his argument. "It may be indiscreet in me, at my time of life," continued Burke, "to provoke enemies, and give occasion to friends to desert me; yet, if my firm adherence to the British Constitution places me in such a dilemma, I shall risk all; and, as public duty and public prudence teach me, with my last words exclaim, 'Fly from the French Constitution.'" "There is no loss of friends," whispered Fox. Burke for a moment paused, and then added: "Yes, there *is* a loss of friends. I know the price of my conduct; I have done my duty at the expense of my friend. Our friendship is at an end."

At the conclusion of this speech, Burke crossed over to the Ministerial side of the House, and took his seat between Pitt and Dundas. Meantime tears were rolling down the manly cheeks of Fox. He attempted to speak, but was so overcome by his emotions that he was for some time unable to proceed. Mr. Moore had known persons who were present at that memorable scene, which they told him was quite indescribable. Though Fox wept, and even sobbed, yet he and his friends still continued, in and out of Parliament, to say very harsh things of Burke.

After this open rupture with Fox and his party,

Burke rarely attended Parliament. As soon as the Session was over, he repaired to Margate, the sea-air and sea-bathing being deemed advisable for the recovery of Mrs. Burke's health. There he completed a vindication of the "Reflections," as well as of his whole political life. The book, more specially addressed to his late Parliamentary friends and colleagues, was entitled, "An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs." It is, indeed, a calm, dispassionate appeal to the reason of cultivated men, and is remarkable for cogent reasoning, interesting research, and a clear, animated style. Here the author had not to depict crime, excite pity, or rouse indignation, and hence the essay is distinguished for sobriety of ornament, and severity of diction.

In the first part of this Appeal he defends his recent conduct in Parliament, and shows the perfect consistency of the political principles inculcated in the "Reflections" with those he had all his life advocated. He reminds his late colleagues that he had belonged to Lord Rockingham's section of the Whig party; and that though he had generally acted with Mr. Fox, yet, on very important questions, like Parliamentary Reform, the Marriage Bill, and the Subscription of Anglican Clergymen to the Thirty-nine Articles, he had totally disagreed with that statesman.

In the second part, he shows, at considerable length, the perfect consonance of his principles with those of the Whigs who brought about the Revolution of 1688,

and who managed the prosecution of Dr. Sacheverell for his sermon on Passive Obedience. The interesting extracts he gives from the Parliamentary speeches and declarations of those old Whigs, remarkably coincide with the sentiment of the great majority of Catholic Divines on the arduous and delicate question there treated.*

The Whigs of 1688, like Burke himself, who defended their opinions, though they might not have grasped the Catholic Doctrine on the nature and origin of the Civil Power in all its integrity, yet were far more conservative in their opinions than their Tory opponents of the seventeenth century. They were more conservative; for what political doctrine can be more revolutionary than the one professed by those ancient Tories, which leaves the Religion, the Constitution, the laws, the liberties, the property of a nation at the mercy of a ruthless, godless tyranny? The duty of a Christian, as a great French Philosopher observes,† is not a passive obedience, but an active obedience to the just mandates of a King, and a passive resistance to his unjust commands. Such is ever the duty of the individual Christian, and (in ordinary cases) of the Christian Commonwealth, too. But in regard to the latter, there are certain extreme, exceptional cases, where the obligation of allegiance to the Sovereign, as that of filial obedience in the family,

* See note in Appendix.

† M. de Bonald.

may be dissolved by the laws of God and nature. Power having been instituted by the Deity for the conservation of human society, for the maintenance of religion, order, law, property, and freedom in a state ; it is evident that a prince who labours systematically to subvert and destroy these blessings, or any considerable portion of them, defeats the very purpose of the Divine institution of Civil Sovereignty, and therefore deserves to be removed. No one will deny, that a King, when afflicted with insanity, should be set aside. But when a Monarch has fallen into the frenzy of an impious, anti-social tyranny, why should his authority be preserved intact ? His legal deposition is accomplished, not in virtue of the sovereignty of the people, but in virtue of the sovereignty of God ; not by a lawless multitude, but by the constituent orders of the State, the assembled Clergy, Nobles, and Commons, and when possible, with the sanction of the Head of the Church. In the Middle Ages, when the Sovereign Pontiff exercised in political matters an arbitration, universally recognised, and felt to be salutary, the problem of the lawfulness of a nation's armed resistance to tyranny in particular cases was more easily solved.

The practice then established, too, of making the profession of the national creed a part and parcel of Royal legitimacy, was another great barrier against political despotism. For as Religion embraces the whole sum of moral and social obligations, so those

are the worst tyrants who strive to overthrow the doctrines or the government of the Church. This principle has been perpetuated in some modern states; and in Protestant England itself, since the Revolution of 1688, the King, under pain of a forfeiture of the Crown, must profess the national creed.

But setting aside these rare cases of extreme, irremediable tyranny, when a whole nation is justified in rising in defence of its religion and fundamental laws; the duty of citizens, whether in their individual or their collective capacity, is to offer nothing but passive resistance to the unjust decrees of power.

But even this right of passive resistance was denied by the Anglican Tories, whether lay or clerical, of the seventeenth century. A few of them, like Sir Robert Filmer, carried their doctrine to the most fearful lengths, and held that in certain cases, Royal mandates, even when repugnant to the Divine law, were to be obeyed.*

This principle of passive obedience King Henry VIII., as Dr. Lingard justly observes, was the first to introduce into England; and the Church founded by that tyrant naturally imbibed the doctrine, and transfused it into her decrees, her homilies, and her canons. Hence these Anglican Tories herein showed

* "A man," says Sir Robert Filmer, "is bound to obey the King's command against law—nay, in some cases against divine laws."—*Patriarcha*, p. 100: apud Hallam, *Hist. of England*, vol. ii., p. 465.

themselves worthy disciples of their master. And it was the hideous caricature which they made of the Catholic dogma of the Divine origin of the Civil Power, that has served to render it so unpopular in England.

In the Churches established by Calvin and Knox, in Scotland, Switzerland, and France, the opposite and still more dangerous error of the sovereignty of the people was openly proclaimed.* So incapable is heresy of ever finding the true medium in doctrine!

The French emigrant Nobility, including the brave Marquis de Bouillé, and others, testified by letters their gratitude to Burke for the great services he had rendered to their unfortunate country. The interesting letters addressed by Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII., and by his brother, the Comte d'Artois, who subsequently mounted the throne under the name of Charles X., and wherein they express their deep obligations to the illustrious defender of Religion and society, may be seen in the valuable correspondence published twenty years ago by Earl Fitzwilliam and General Burke.

M. de Calonne, the former Minister of Louis XVI., paid a visit to England, and sought an interview with the great statesman at Margate. Monsieur had suggested that some French gentleman should be appointed to reside in England, and to be in frequent

* This principle, warmly defended by the Huguenot minister Jurieu, was afterwards developed by the Genevese sophist, Rousseau.

attendance on Burke, in order to take his advice on French affairs, and to procure his mediation with the British Government in behalf of their suffering country. The choice fell on the Chevalier de la Bintinnaye. He was accordingly a frequent guest at Beaconsfield ; and from this time forward numbers of emigrant French Clergymen and Nobles partook of the generous hospitality of its illustrious host.

After M. de Calonne's interview with Burke in the summer of 1791, it was judged expedient that young Richard Burke, his son, should be immediately deputed to Coblenz, there to gain a better insight into the state of French affairs, to communicate to his father the sentiments of the exiles, as well as the results of his own observation and experience, and so enable his parent to give sounder advice to the British Government, as well as to the princes and nobles of France. This mission, though of course it made no pretension to an official character, the Ministry, notwithstanding, looked on with a somewhat jealous eye. Dundas, however, gave permission to Richard Burke to communicate to the Government such information as might throw light on the views of the emigrants, or on the policy of foreign Powers. The young man met with a most warm reception and kind hospitality from the French exiles at Brussels and at Coblenz. They unanimously expressed their deep thankfulness for the services of his illustrious father to the suffering cause in which they were engaged, as well as their

profound admiration for his integrity, courage, and genius.

In the valuable correspondence already cited, great light is thrown, not only on this mission of the younger Burke, but on the political history of that much agitated period. In his letters to his father, during the autumn of 1791, Richard Burke describes the feelings of the French emigrants at the Courts of Bruffels and of Coblenz, as well as the dispositions and sentiments of the different European Powers in regard to revolutionary France. As to the former, he writes, "I do not think anything can be better; no philosophy, which is quite out of fashion; but on all points, political and religious, a sober, rational, practical way of thinking."*

Of the dispositions of the Foreign Courts, Richard Burke received the most contradictory accounts. Sometimes he is told that the mutual jealousy subsisting between Austria and Prussia would prove an effectual bar to any alliance between those two powers in support of the cause of social order.

Sometimes he hears that a deep distrust of the policy of the British Cabinet, with regard to the affairs of revolutionary France, was the cause of the inaction of those states, as well as of Russia, in the then momentous crisis.

Amid these conflicting rumours, he begs his father

* "Correspondence," vol. iii., p. 241. By *philosophy* was then understood unbelief.

to obtain an interview with the British Ministers, and to learn their intentions in regard to the Allies, and whether they would be inclined to oppose the intervention of the European Powers in behalf of moral and social order, so cruelly assailed in France.

The answer which Burke receives from the English Ministers, is that they look with no favourable eye on the state of things in that country ; but that they are determined to observe a *bonâ fide* neutrality.

He writes to his son, that he had dined at Lord Grenville's, where he met Mr. Pitt, and where the state of France was the subject of a long and animated conversation, which lasted from five till eleven o'clock at night. He says that the two Ministers were right in their general views and inclinations; but totally averse to giving them effect. This disinclination he ascribes to two causes. The first was a belief on their part that the doctrines and excesses of the French Revolution would not affect the British community ; and the second was their rooted distrust of the political views of the German Emperor in regard to affairs in France.

The first objection, Burke says, he endeavoured to remove by all those reasons well known to his son, and which he afterwards put forth in various publications that shall subsequently be noticed.

The second objection, regarding the policy of the Emperor, Burke endeavoured to meet by alleging that the vacillation of that potentate sprang, in all

probability, not from craft or dissimulation, but from a constitutional inconstancy of character, or from intrigues in behalf of the royal captives of France. The two Ministers received Burke's representations with great patience and kindness, but they abstained from expressing any acquiescence in his views.

In his confidential communications to his son, he expresses his misgivings as to the political views of the Emperor Leopold. Remembering his oppression of the Church, and his revolutionary policy when Grand Duke of Tuscany, he says, "I am afraid that the Emperor and some of his Ministers, though they do not approve (as they cannot approve) of the destruction of the French Monarchy, are infinitely pleased with the robbery of the Church property, and the humiliation of the gentry."

Here Burke shows how well he knew, that what was called the *enlightened despotism* of the eighteenth century, that is to say, a despotism hostile to the Church, and to Aristocracy, and to municipal freedom, paved the way for the licentious Democracy that then menaced destruction to all Europe.

He next advises his son as to certain courses to be recommended to the emigrants of Coblenz. He gives the following counsel, which is too important not to be cited in the writer's very words:—"The Bourbon princes," he says, "ought to promise distinctly, and without ambiguity, that they mean, when the Monarchy, as the essential basis, shall be restored, to

secure with it a free Constitution; and that for this purpose they will cause, at a meeting of the States, freely chosen, according to the ancient legal order, the vote by order, all *lettres de cachet*, and other means of arbitrary imprisonment to be abolished. That all taxation shall be levied by the said States, conjointly with the King; that responsibility shall be established, and the public revenue put out of the power of abuse and malversation; a canonical synod of the Gallican Church to reform all abuses; and (as, unfortunately, the King has lost all reputation) they should pledge themselves, with their lives and fortunes, to support, along with their King, those conditions and that wise order which can alone support a free and vigorous government.”*

What wisdom in those words! The scheme of government here proposed is widely different from the Royal Charter of 1814. It is true that twenty years had made great changes in France, but the plan of Burke might, with some modifications, have even then been carried out.

He proposed to Mr. Pitt and to Lord Grenville to send his son on a secret mission to Berlin, to sound the dispositions of the Prussian Court in regard to the state of affairs in France. But though the mission was to be strictly private, and to be unaccompanied with any gratuity, or mark of honour, yet the advice met with no encouragement on the part of the Ministry.

In November, 1791, Richard Burke returned to

* “Correspondence,” vol. iii., pp. 348-9.

England, and communicated with fuller details to his father the results of his observations at Bruffels and at Coblenz. In the following January he left Beaconsfield, and arrived in Dublin, where he had been appointed Secretary to the Catholic Board. Of the abilities he displayed in his new capacity, and of the remarkable letters he addressed to his father on the subject of Catholic Emancipation, I shall have occasion to speak in my concluding Lecture, when the Irish policy of Edmund Burke shall be brought under consideration.

Richard Burke returned to England in the summer of 1794. The coalition between the old Rockingham Whigs and the party of Mr. Pitt, which Burke for several years had been labouring to accomplish, was at last brought about. The Duke of Portland, Earl Fitzwilliam, Earl Spencer, and Mr. Windham consented to take office in the Cabinet of Mr. Pitt. It was agreed that Earl Fitzwilliam should be appointed Viceroy of Ireland, and Mr. Richard Burke, junior, his Secretary. A minority of Whigs, consisting of Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. (afterwards Earl) Grey, Mr. Erskine, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Lambton, and others remained on the benches of Opposition. Here a new classification of parties took place, that has exercised the greatest influence on our subsequent history.

Burke now retired from Parliament; and through the patronage of Earl Fitzwilliam, his son Richard was elected for the borough of Malton, in Yorkshire, which

he himself had for several years represented. During the canvass, Burke and his son passed several weeks at Wentworth Hall, now the seat of Earl Fitzwilliam, and where, in the time of his early and dear friend, Lord Rockingham, he had spent so many happy days.

On his return to London, Burke gave a dinner to a party of friends, in celebration of his son's election. Never for many years had he appeared so joyous. Alas! it was the last gleam of sunshine that was ever to brighten his existence. His son, whose health had, unknowingly to him, been for some time on the decline, took ill the next day. He was ordered to be removed for change of air to Brompton, which was then a rural spot. In despite, however, of the loving care of his parents, and of the best medical advice, his malady grew worse, till on the 2nd August, 1794, he expired in the arms of his affectionate father, at the age of thirty-six.

The shock was terrible to both his parents. Burke threw himself on the corpse, sobbed convulsively, and could with difficulty be removed. That son, so full of promise, so virtuous, so talented, so industrious, had been snatched away, when the flower of his genius was about to open. He had long shared in the literary and political labours of his father; and, indeed, had stood more in the relation to him of a brother than of a son.

It had long been thought that Burke had formed too favourable an estimate of his son's abilities; but

Dr. Walker King, afterwards the learned Bishop of Rochester, and the celebrated Grattan, concurred in bearing testimony to the high talents of young Richard Burke, whether for business or for speculation. Some remarkable passages written by him in his father's "Reflections on the French Revolution," and still more his political letters in the "Correspondence," published twenty years ago, prove that Richard was the worthy son of an illustrious father—*filius dignus nobili patre!*

Burke reproached himself with carelessness for not having noticed the decay of his son's health; and this reproach, utterly unfounded as it was, caused him nights of sleepless agony. In his walks about Beaconsfield he would henceforth avoid the sight of the spire of that country church where, with the remains of his beloved son, all his earthly hopes lay buried.

There are two opuscula of Burke, which form the connecting link between the "Reflections on the French Revolution," and the "Letters on a Regicide Peace." Here the great writer puts off the robes of his gorgeous rhetoric, and in the more homely garb of a plain, unadorned style, sets forth lessons of the most admirable wisdom. As they were addressed more to statesmen than to the general public, there was the less need of captivating the fancy, or enlisting the feelings of men.

In the first Tract, entitled "Thoughts on French Affairs," and published in December, 1791, Burke

describes the internal condition and the foreign relations, the moral and the material resources of the several European states. He defines the character of the French Revolution, so utterly different from preceding political changes, and shows its strong resemblance to the so-called Reformation of the sixteenth century. This resemblance was manifest in the doctrinal character of the French Revolution, in its proselytizing spirit, in the union of spiritual propaganda with political ambition, and in the enthusiasm which, among certain parties in almost every European kingdom, its principles awakened.

That political doctrines, apart from religion, can call forth even among the subjects of foreign Commonwealths a spirit of ardent partizanship, create divisions among their citizens, group them into factions, excite commotions and rebellions, and shape their domestic and foreign policy, is proved by examples drawn from ancient Greece and from mediæval Italy and Germany.

After having characterized the nature of the French Revolution, its general bearings and tendency, the author reviews the condition of Great Britain, then that of Austria, Prussia, the smaller principalities of Germany, Spain, the Italian States, and lastly, Russia. He examines what are the hopes and the fears which each of those kingdoms inspires, what are the elements of strength, and the elements of decay in those several Commonwealths. Here he evinces

an intimate knowledge of the governments and peoples of Europe—their past and present state, as well as their mutual relations one to the other. In the other English writers of the last century, whose prejudices are often so narrow and insular, and whose policy so egotistical, it were in vain to look for such ample knowledge of foreign countries, and such generous, disinterested views in their regard, as Burke here exhibits.

Here he points out the very false appreciation formed of the French Revolution by the leading potentates of Europe, especially the Emperor of Germany, and the King of Prussia, and the gross mismanagement of the war against France, which was but the natural consequence of that false appreciation.

Again, the bad principles prevalent during the latter half of the eighteenth century at so many European Courts, served to inspire them with a latent sympathy for the French Revolution, especially as it showed itself in its first assaults on the Clergy, the Nobility, and the great legal bodies.

Revolutionary France, by its organized tyranny, by the active propagation of its irreligious and anti-social principles, by its net-work of clubs spread over the face of the country, and which effectually stifled the first attempts at resistance, is shown to be a source of formidable and permanent danger to the peace—nay, the very existence of Europe.

Utterly undone as France then was, beggared, de-

moralized, degraded, defoliated by so many plagues, physical and moral, bankrupt alike in finance, in law, and in religion; yet she borrowed from her very frenzy a sort of preternatural strength; and the vices, which to other states would have brought death, afforded her a mysterious nurture. "Such was that Pontic Monarch of old days," who, in the words of the poet,

*"Did feed on poisons, till they had become
A sort of nutriment."*

Hence, in a state of things so entirely new, a superficial study of history (in Burke's opinion), was but calculated to mislead.

Not only was the Revolution from various causes most potent for evil; and on the other hand, the European Powers leagued to resist it, rendered from their jealousies and divisions, and in many cases from their laxity of principles, most feeble for the promotion of good; but each of those powers had more or less to contend with domestic foes. For as in a great number of states there were certain parties more or less favourable to the doctrines of the French Revolution, the external conflagration, by reason of such combustible materials in the interior, was rendered all the more dangerous. Hence, war by the coalesced Sovereigns of Europe was the only resource to encounter an evil of such fearful magnitude.

This tract was followed, two years afterwards, by the one entitled "The Policy of the Allies," and ap-

peared just as England had, in November, 1793, engaged in the great anti-revolutionary war.

In this treatise, Burke begins by observing, that the time and circumstances were not propitious to the publication, as was proposed, of a manifesto on the part of the Allied Powers. A period of disaster for the arms of the Allies was not a time when manifestoes should be published by them. And least of all, should such manifestoes contain menaces that, under the circumstances, could excite but needless irritation. Equally unavailing, too, in such a state of things, were any promises that might be made.

Burke then proceeds to show that, even in a more prosperous state of affairs, the promises of the Allies, and of the British Government among others, would not be likely to inspire much confidence and much hope. And the reason of this was, the utter neglect and utter indifference manifested by all the Powers for the just claims of the devoted adherents of the King and of the Constitution of France. "They are kept," says the author, "in a state of obscurity and contempt, and in a degree of indigence at times bordering on beggary."* "How can we be sincere," he asks, "in our declarations to restore the French Monarchy, when its two main pillars—the Clergy and the Nobles—are disowned and disregarded by us? Their names have never been put forward in any declaration or treaty; and while we profess a desire to restore the

* Works, vol. iii., p. 412.

Religion, the Throne, the laws, and the liberties of France, we do not deign to consult her Clergy or her Nobles in the matter. The former are looked on as mere objects of charity; the latter are either utterly neglected, or employed only as mercenary soldiers."*

The conduct of the Allies in regard to France must always be an object of distrust as long as these Powers, while they exchange prisoners of war with the Jacobins, utterly abandon the French Royalists in their service, when they happen to be made captives, to the tender mercies of their revolutionary foes.

In any new arrangement of the social and political affairs of France, on the part of the Allied sovereigns, the latter will do well to bear in mind that in such a settlement of the domestic concerns of a foreign country, they should act the part of *auxiliaries* and *mediators only*, and not that of *principals*. They are next to consider, who constitute *the people of France*; and who are the parties through whom their proposals of mediation should be made.

The France the Allies had to deal with was not, according to Burke, *geographical* France, but *moral* and *political* France. The French people were not the unconnected, physical units spread over the soil, but graduated, organic bodies, bound together in moral unity, and subordinated to a supreme power. France was composed, not of separate, dispersed atoms, but of large compact bodies—the Clergy, the Nobles, the

Third Estate, the parliaments, or judicial tribunals, the municipal corporations, the bailiwicks, the townships, and the rest. This was the *real* France ; but the real France was not then to be found within its natural boundaries, but in foreign lands. The term "People," applied to the mere numbers of a nation, irrespective of its distribution into ranks, orders, and professions, is an abuse springing out of the false doctrine of a chimerical equality, and which, as Burke justly observes, "lay at the root of the calamities which Europe was then endeavouring by war and policy to cure."*

Having shown who constitute the people of France, the author next points out that the existing Terrorism, misnamed a Government, could not by any possibility be made the medium for restoring moral and political order in France. "How," he asks, "can Monarchy be supported by principled regicides, Religion by professed atheists, order by clubs of Jacobins, property by committees of proscription, and jurisprudence by revolutionary tribunals?"†

He shows that hereditary Monarchy requires an hereditary Nobility, and that the system called "Royal Democracy" was utterly absurd and incongruous, and more fatal to France than even a Democratic Republic. He remarks that the different sections of revolutionists—the Moderates, the Girondists, and the Jacobins—were alike infidels in Religion, and anarchists in politics, and differed only in degrees of wickedness.

* Works, vol. iii., p. 412.

† *Ibid*, p. 415.

He next shows that France was then divided into two categories—the oppressors and the oppressed. The oppressors were the reigning Jacobins, who had spread over the whole country a net-work of clubs that carried into every family circle the most rigid inquisitorial inspection, and from the general of an army down to the humblest peasant, made every Frenchman tremble for his existence. The oppressed were all who, in whatever class, sought to practise the duties of their religion, or who, like the burghers and the farmers, were possessed of some kind of property. Vast numbers of this description had, on the most frivolous pretexts, been condemned to death; and, according to the most moderate estimate, twenty thousand at least lay in prison. “Indeed,” says the author, “two persons could not meet and confer without hazard to their lives.”

How then, in such a state of things, could the impious anarchy be put down by any resistance from within? And if this were impracticable, what should have been then the policy of the Allies in regard to revolutionary France? “The main object of the war,” says Burke, very justly, “was to assist the religion, the dignity, and the property of that country to repossess themselves of the means of their natural influence.” But this very object the Allies had, by their systematic neglect of the French Princes, the French Clergy, Nobility, and Magistracy, seemed to have utterly disregarded. All these parties, as common prudence

teaches, should, according to the nature of their several callings, have been conferred with, consulted, or employed in all the civil, diplomatic, and military affairs of their own country. And when the arms of the Allied Sovereigns shall have triumphed, there could be no security, no permanent peace for France, unless those great bodies—the Clergy, the Nobles, the Magistrates, the municipal councillors, the bailiffs of the different townships, presided over by their King, were restored to their natural spheres of usefulness and power. And here the task was comparatively easy; for as soon as a footing was obtained by the Allied Powers in France, then the emigrant Clergy, composed, as Burke truly says, of men “now known to be the most discreet, gentle, well-tempered, conciliatory, virtuous, and pious persons who in any order probably existed in the world,” would naturally resume their mission of spiritual teaching, and of moral and social amelioration. Again, in the expatriated landed interest of France there would be (to use the author’s words), “an exceedingly numerous, well-informed, sensible, ingenious, high-principled, and spirited body of cavaliers,” that, in the event of a Restoration, could be made a potent instrument of civilization.

A just tribute is then paid to the Princes of the blood royal—Monsieur and the Comte d’Artois, who afterwards, under the names of Louis XVIII. and of Charles X., ascended the throne of France. Burke has here admirably portrayed the dispositions of

King Louis XVI. and of his two exiled brothers—the high qualities of mind and heart that distinguished the three, as well as certain weaknesses mixed up with their virtues. It is remarkable how the portraits he drew of Monsieur and of the Comte d'Artois, as he had known them in their youth and in exile, were found thirty years afterwards, when those august personages had regained their ancestral heritage, to represent with wonderful truthfulness the lineaments of their character.

He strongly condemns the conduct of the Allies in relegating to the obscurity of a provincial town these Princes, who, by their virtues and talents, were the ornaments of their high station.

The opinion of those who declared that no Frenchmen were to be employed by the Allied Powers in the social reconstruction of their country, save those who had taken no decided part either for or against the Revolution, and who, in the momentous struggle, in whose issue every right, human and divine, was involved, had held a sort of neutral attitude,—this opinion is held up to merited scorn. Among the public men of France, Burke declares he knows no such individual, except, perhaps, the sensual and mean-spirited Prince of Conti. Such men, wherever found, can, I think, be compared only to those abject angels spoken of by Dante, who, at the moment of the grand revolt,

*“ Were neither true nor rebel to their God,
But for themselves alone.”*

Yet the opinion adverted to was really expressed by many of the supporters of Mr. Pitt; and this among other things may serve to explain the uncertain, hesitating policy of that statesman in the conduct of the anti-revolutionary war.

Burke boldly defends the principle of intervention, when dictated by a sense of justice and of self-preservation, in the internal affairs of a foreign country. Herein he is supported by the judgment of the most eminent writers on international law, and among others by Vattel. And the highest authority, the Sovereign Pontiff himself, whom Benedict XIV. once called "the supreme defender of justice on the earth," has, in a recent solemn Encyclical addressed to the whole Church, censured those who declare that in no case whatsoever is one State justified in interfering in the internal concerns of another. Such a doctrine, so repugnant to natural justice and humanity, has never been carried out in practice; and they who preach it are the first to violate it, and that on the most selfish and even frivolous grounds. Such intervention can of course be justified only by extreme necessity, and must be regulated by the rules of the strictest equity.

Burke strongly urges on the Allies never to wound the national susceptibilities of the French, and to show a most religious regard for their national institutions and national independence. It was with infinite pain he saw the English, on taking possession of the seaport of Toulon, instead of delivering up the French fleet to

the Royalist naval officers, unrig and dismast the vessels. Every French town, every colony taken by the fleets or armies of the Allies, should, according to him, be occupied in the name of the King of France, and be surmounted with the white flag. It was only a policy so just, so temperate, so disinterested, that could prevent dissensions among the Allied Powers, and ultimately secure victory to their arms.

In the event of a Restoration, the Catholic Church must, in the opinion of the author, be restored to her full rights and dignity ; while abuses in her should be reformed by the competent authorities. Full toleration, on the model of the Edict of Nantes, should be accorded to the Calvinist communities.

When order in the distracted country shall have been re-established, then the old temperate Monarchy, on the triple basis of the Clergy, the Nobles, and the Third Estate, must be built up anew. No laws are to be passed, and no taxes to be levied by the King, without the co-operation of the Three Estates ; and all the municipal and communal institutions of the realm to be restored to their pristine vigour.

Burke enters very fully into the question of indemnity and of punishment.

The masses, however guilty, though they may be the objects of careful vigilance, must, of course, be exempted from punishment. Those also who had taken up arms against their Sovereign should be pardoned ; for when a civil war has been terminated by

peace, then all penalties for crimes involved in such a state of warfare must of necessity be remitted. The parties whom the author designates as the fitting objects of legal severity, are the leaders of the Jacobin Clubs, the men stained with the blood of the King, the Queen, and the Princesses—those polluted with judicial murders, those engaged in the defecration and the burning of Churches, and the other wretches who had outraged humanity in every shape. The more hardened and desperate of these criminals were, he considered, worthy of capital punishment; while on their less guilty compeers, exile and imprisonment might be justly inflicted.

Lastly, the war, according to the author, was nothing less than a *religious* war, and, to be successful, was to be carried on in the same spirit. The Ministry, on the other hand, not fully apprehending the momentous crisis in which they were engaged, acted as if they deemed the war one of ordinary national interests.

Such is the substance of this tract, entitled “The Policy of the Allies;” and I think that those who read it with attention will concur in the statement I made in the first Lecture, that perhaps of all the great qualities of Burke’s mind, none was more salient than his wisdom—his deep, practical wisdom.

In 1795, the Duke of Norfolk—the one who, unhappily, apostatized from the Faith—affailed from his place in the Upper House the illustrious author of the

"Reflections on the Revolution," and said that his book struck at the free principles of the British Constitution, and reproached him with forsaking the Whig party. Burke repelled this attack in a letter to a youthful friend, Mr. William Elliot; and this letter is, in my opinion, equal to any of his shorter effusions. It abounds in passages full of thought, and as remarkable for the elevation of the sentiments as for the vigour of the style.

"As to that party," he says, "to which his Grace alludes, and which has long taken its leave of me, I believe the principles of the book which he condemns are very conformable to the opinions of many the most considerable and most grave in that description of politicians. A few, indeed, who, I admit, are equally respectable in all points, differ from me, and talk his Grace's language." *

The Duke of Portland, Earl Fitzwilliam, Mr. Windham, Mr. John Cavendish, and Burke himself, were surely no unworthy representatives of the old Whigs; and the weight of their example, and, still more, the force of their representations, brought over with them, to the defence of the Constitution, the majority of that party.

How well, in the following passage, does Burke describe the two feelings of popular patriotism and of monarchical fidelity, which in the Christian temperate Monarchy are so happily blended! How well he

* P. 70, vol. 5.

shows that false fanaticism can be successfully encountered only by a genuine enthusiasm.

"It is not," says he, "a hazarded assertion, it is a great truth, that when once things are gone out of their ordinary course, it is by acts out of the ordinary course they can alone be re-established. Republican spirit can only be combated by a spirit of the same nature; of the same nature, but informed with another spirit, and pointing to another end. I would persuade a resistance both to the corruption and to the reformation that prevails. It will not be the weaker, but much the stronger, for combating both together. A victory over real corruptions would enable us to baffle the spurious and pretended reforms.* . . I would wish to call the impulses of individuals at once to the aid and to the control of authority. By this, which I call the true republican spirit, paradoxical as it may appear, Monarchies alone can be rescued from the imbecility of Courts, and the madness of the crowd."†

Again, we meet with the following striking remark:—"Private persons may sometimes assume that sort of magistracy which does not depend on the nomination of Kings, or on the election of the people, but as an inherent, self-existent power, which both would recognize."‡

How applicable to Burke himself were these

* P. 79, vol. v.

† P. 80, vol. v.

‡ P. 81.

words, at the great political crisis in which they were uttered !

In 1796, in the course of a debate on the affiliated societies in this country, the Duke of Bedford took occasion to attack the Government for having granted a pension to Burke, and to sneer at his change of political principles, and at his inconsistency in accepting, in despite of his ancient protests against lavish expenditure, a bounty from the Crown. The principles and conduct of the great statesman, and the vast services he had rendered to the empire, were nobly vindicated on this occasion by Lord Grenville. Burke immediately took up his pen, and addressed to Earl Fitzwilliam a letter of indignant comment on the unworthy attack of the Duke of Bedford. Never were more pointed irony and scathing sarcasm united with greater richness of imagery, and sagacity of observation.

What can be more withering than his history of the rise of the family of his detractor, who, grudging the meed allotted by the Crown to a great man for various and signal services, had so wantonly assailed him in Parliament ! What can be more pathetically beautiful, too, than his allusion to his lost, much-loved son, who, he says, had he been spared, would have filled up what was wanting in the measure of his own deserts, and by his genius, knowledge, industry, and virtue, would have more than repaid to his King and country the bounty of which he had been recently made the object ! What an overwhelming picture of

parental grief is there not in the following words, and what Christian resignation too!—

“The storm,” he says, “has gone over me, and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honours; I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth! There, and prostrate there, I most unfeignedly recognise the Divine justice, and in some degree submit to it. But whilst I humble myself before God, I do not know that it is forbidden to repel the attacks of unjust and inconsiderate men.”*

How noble is the passage in which he commemorates the friendship which, through all the vicissitudes of fortune, had subsisted between himself and Lord Keppel, the uncle of the assailant! What a fine sketch does he give of his character! And how generous is the tribute to Holland—the land to which his friend traced his origin! In the contrast drawn between the conduct of the uncle and of the nephew, what a dignified rebuke is administered to the latter! Speaking of Lord Keppel, he says, “though it was never shown in insult to any human being, Lord Keppel was something high. It was a wild stock of pride, on which the tenderest of all hearts had grafted the milder virtues.”†

Yet though this letter abounds in great excellences of thought and of diction, it cannot, I think,

* P. 136, vol. v. Bohn's ed.

† P. 147, vol. v.

be placed on a level with Burke's more finished compositions. Such is the tumult of grief and of indignation in the illustrious author's breast, that at times his metaphors seem to get beyond his control, and his amplification becomes excessive.

As the war with revolutionary France went on, and as, owing chiefly to the mismanagement of the British Government and of the Allied Powers, it had been attended with many reverses, and seemed yet far from the accomplishment of its ends, many supporters of the Ministry recommended negotiations for peace with the French Directory. Lord Auckland, especially, published a pamphlet to that effect. And soon afterwards, with the view of founding the disposition of the Revolutionary Government as to the establishment of pacific relations with Great Britain, Lord Malmesbury was deputed envoy to France.

The public mind of England, which had entered on the war with so much energy and ardour, then seemed, in consequence of a series of military disasters, to be, like the Ministry, depressed and desponding.

It was at this critical juncture, in 1796, Burke, though bowed down under domestic sorrow, and confined by sickness to his couch, called up all his energies to disabuse the popular mind of England, and to rouse her to new efforts in behalf of all moral and social order. The "Letters on a Regicide Peace," which he wrote on this memorable occasion, form a testament in which he bequeathed a legacy of political

wisdom his country knew well how to prize. These Letters revealed the genius of the French Revolution in all its hideous deformity, showed its inextinguishable spirit of profelytism as well as of aggrandizement, and put to shame the false prudence and the craven policy that, at the risk of entailing lasting dishonour, and inflicting irreparable mischief on the Empire, was willing to purchase a momentary truce with the arch-enemies of all religion and all civilization. The work breathed a new spirit into the nation, and roused its dormant energies. Never did the genius of the author shine out with greater lustre; and splendid as had been the meridian of this great luminary, the setting of the orb, though encompassed by dark clouds of public and domestic calamity, was something more gorgeous and magnificent still.

Three of these Letters were addressed to a Member of the House of Commons, and the fourth (which appeared after the author's death), to his friend, Earl Fitzwilliam. These letters I shall proceed to analyse, interweaving into the analysis remarks of my own in support of the views put forth by the illustrious writer.

After some introductory remarks on the various vicissitudes of states, and after showing that their bloom, maturity, and decay, depend, not as in the case of physical beings, on a law of necessity, the author proceeds to examine the nature of the Jacobin Republic of France. He shows that the Revolution

introduced not only a new system of polity, but a new system of doctrines, and that it was no less menacing to the moral order and social stability of states, than to their material prosperity. Hence, in the conflict with this Revolution, the necessity of another system of policy, and of another mode of warfare than those heretofore employed.

The author then goes on to notice the state of despondency into which the military successes of the Jacobin Republic had thrown Great Britain and her Allies. He shows that England, as forming part of the great European Commonwealth, cannot, without the certainty of eventual ruin, separate herself from those Allies, and pursue a selfish, isolated policy. He observes that England (as, indeed, in a later part of the work he proves), has abundant material resources for carrying on hostilities; and that, as she has to deal with an enemy bent on her spoliation, her degradation, and her ruin, it is only by a liberal expenditure of her riches in warfare, she can hope to save her wealth and her trade, as well as her honour and her greatness. "If wealth," says he, in a passage which ought to be for ever engraven on the minds of statesmen, "if wealth is the obedient and laborious slave of virtue and of public honour, then wealth is in its place, and has its right use. But if this order is changed, and honour is to be sacrificed to the conservation of riches, riches which have neither eyes, nor hands, nor anything truly vital in them, cannot long

survive the being of their vivifying powers, their legitimate masters, and their potent protectors." *

England, carrying on a war of petty interests, when she ought to have waged a war of principles, had obtained, indeed, some trifling advantages ; but these did not subserve the great original end for which she had taken up arms. Her safety was bound up with that of the great European Commonwealth, and the neglect of that mighty momentous interest would render worse than nugatory all such paltry material gains.

The great error of all the Powers confederated against Revolutionary France, was, as Burke shows, the fond belief that it was in their power to bring, at any moment, their implacable enemy to terms of peace. Hence a want of steadiness in their aims, and an irregularity in their course of action. The Regicide Republic marches on directly to its purpose, improving every advantage, rejecting with scorn all offers of amity, and never forgetting its two-fold object—the propagation of its destructive principles, and the establishment in every country of its odious ascendancy.

The author then goes on to show that the pacific overtures made by Great Britain to the godless Republic were likely to have the effect, and already had the effect, of increasing its arrogance on the one hand, and of bringing her own subjects within the sphere of its deadly influence on the other. This Revolutionary

Republic fought, in all its negotiations, to separate the people of every land from their rulers, and thus offered a direct insult to the very Governments with which it was in treaty. Next, in those negotiations, it made, contrary to all right and usage, natural boundaries and political convenience, rather than solemn pacts and conventions, the sole foundation of its territorial claims. National dignity—a term as vague as that of natural boundaries—was another standard the Jacobin Republic set up, as the rule of its dealings with foreign states.

Burke then proceeds to enumerate the successive insults offered by Revolutionary France to Great Britain, and blames the British Government for a tame acquiescence, not less derogatory to its dignity, than it was perilous to its highest interests. This subserviency to the godless Republic, on the part of our Cabinet, would, in the first place, exert a bad moral influence on its official envoys; secondly, degrade the British Government in the eyes of Europe; and, lastly, augment the insolence, and inflame the violence of the disaffected at home.

The author then shows that secret overtures for peace, made by the British Government through its agents, have been thrice haughtily repulsed by the French. The Regicide Republic, not content with repelling such overtures, put forth declarations, that by striking at the honour and independence of England, precluded the possibility of all pacific

negotiation. The Directory declared that the British Ministry, supported by a House of Commons which did not represent the sentiments of the people, was carrying on hostilities for promoting the selfish ends of the Aristocracy; next, that the English Government must abjure its unjust hatred to the revolutionary *régime*; and lastly, that no British ambassador could be received who was not authorised to conclude, irrespectively of his country's allies, a definitive treaty of peace between the two states.

Burke proves that a peace concluded under such conditions would be fraught with far graver perils than the most bloody and protracted war. The Regicide Republic, in these insulting demands, virtually called upon the British Crown and Parliament to lay their independence at its feet; while, at the same time, it fanned the flames of domestic rebellion. Secondly, it called upon our Government to stultify its own acts, to cancel the solemn Declaration of Whitehall, put forth in 1793, and to revoke the condemnation of the impiety, rebellion, anarchy, spoliation, sacrilege, and regicide, against which, in common with all Europe, England had taken up arms. Lastly, it called on England to break faith with her allies, and thereby really to incur the guilt of perfidy, so often falsely charged against her, and at the same time, by pursuing the selfish policy of isolation, to imperil her own future safety.

Burke proceeds to show that four-fifths of the na-

tion were adverse to Jacobinism, and that the hostile minority, opposed to all religion, law, and government, was naturally desirous that peace should be concluded with the godless Republic. This minority, by its fanatic zeal and turbulent energy, made up for its comparative paucity of numbers.

The author then proves that a war of principles can be carried on only by popular enthusiasm, and that such enthusiasm the frigid accents and timid, hesitating policy of Mr. Pitt and his colleagues had not been calculated to arouse. The revolutionary fanaticism was to be successfully encountered only by a fervent, Christian, patriotic zeal.

He then, at considerable length, points out that when England took part in the great war of the coalition against Louis XIV., her financial condition was far from flourishing, and not to be compared with her state of prosperity in 1795. If to preserve national independence and civil freedom, England and the Allied Powers, at the close of the seventeenth century, made under even adverse circumstances such strenuous exertions, what sacrifices should they shrink from, when every principle, human and divine, national independence, private property, liberty, honour, life, religion herself, were imperilled ! How can the nations of Europe live in amity with a Republic which tramples under foot all the received doctrines and maxims of municipal jurisprudence and international law ;— which regards all government, not a democracy, as

an usurpation, and dooms all Kings and their adherents to destruction ;—which wages war against the institution of property itself ; and, to use the author's words, makes not confiscations for crimes, but makes crimes for confiscations ;—which roots up by judicial murders the old proprietary of the land ;—lastly, “which abolishes by a formal decree the Christian religion,” refuses all worship to the Supreme Ruler of the universe, hunts down by exile, imprisonment, and death, the ministers of the Church ;—which perverts all the natural affections and instincts of man—founds the family on prostitution itself ; and, in the shape of a harlot, seated on the defecrated altar of Notre Dame, impersonates its own corrupt polity, and the vitiated, debauched reason of its own guilty members ?

Burke then describes, in full detail, and with a terrible energy, the depraved morals and the savage, brutal manners that had grown up under this state of things. The picture has the grandeur, but at times the coarseness, too, of the Shakspearian delineations. After speaking of the dreadful judicial murders, and the wholesale massacres, and the horrible cruelties inflicted by the Jacobins, he adds these words ;—“As to those whom they suffer to die a natural death, they do not permit them to enjoy the last consolations of mankind, or those rights of sepulture which indicate hope, and which mere Nature has taught to mankind in all countries, to soothe the afflictions, and to cover the infirmity of mortal condition. They disgrace men in the

entry into life ; they vitiate and enslave them through the whole course of it, and they deprive them of all comfort at the conclusion of their dishonoured and depraved existence."*

After having described the moral and social influence of the godless Republic on the internal condition of France, the author proceeds to examine what that influence is likely to be on its relations with foreign states.

He shows that nations are not independent of each other, and that the Commonwealth of Europe especially is united by the ties of the Christian religion, and by a similarity of laws, manners, customs, and political institutions. Any great moral revolution, or any violent civil perturbation in one country is sure to affect more or less the various members of this community of nations. And here he proves that the law of vicinage, which holds good in the civil jurisprudence of nations, may be applied to the international relations of states. A country like France, which by its central position, the active, energetic spirit of its inhabitants, and the universal spread of its language, had for several centuries exerted so potent an influence over Europe, was now become the seat and centre of an impious, revolutionary propagandism, all the more dangerous from the circumstances just stated. The Jacobins were a *sect*, as well as an *armed power*. And, therefore, the war waged against them was to be car-

* Vol. v., p. 212, Bohn's ed.

ried on in a very different way, and by very different means, from those employed in ordinary conflicts. All the nations of Europe had taken up arms to resist a power, which, after subverting the throne, the laws, the customs, the institutions, and the religion of France, made an appeal to the disaffected of all lands, and fought to propagate, by fire and sword, its own destructive principles. Great Britain, in its celebrated Declaration of Whitehall, recognized the common peril, and the necessity of a common league against this foe to all moral and social order.

But Burke proceeds to show that the war, originating in this league, was not carried out in its true spirit, and that vacillation, pusillanimity, and selfish views of aggrandizement soon divided the councils of the confederates, and frequently foiled, or at least misdirected, their operations in the field. In vigour, in activity, in the distinctness of their aims, in the promptitude of their measures, the Jacobins far surpassed their opponents; for they knew and felt from the outset that the war they waged was essentially *a war of principles*—a war carried on not only for territorial conquest, but for an atheistic and revolutionary propagandism.

While Austria and Prussia evinced a mutual distrust one of the other, Great Britain, instead of directing her forces against the heart and centre of the hostile power, assailed its circumference. Instead of a war of principles, England was waging a war of commercial acquisition, and of colonial conquest. With no less

justice than severity, Burke censures the British Ministry for not having thrown an army into the west of France, succoured the struggling Christian patriots of La Vendée, whose forces at one time amounted to upwards of fifty thousand men, and who, inspired with an enthusiasm which trebled their numbers, had already gained signal victories over the Republican troops. In case of defeat, the Vendéans would have received ample aid and supplies from the British navy and British army; and, if victorious (as there was all human probability), they would have marched on Paris, strangled Jacobinism, and restored their King, their Laws, their Constitution, and their Religion.

“The operations of the field,” says our author, “have suffered by the errors of the Cabinet.” “It was not such a kind of warfare,” he adds, “he and his political friends, at much personal sacrifice, had so warmly advocated.” He goes on to show that so soon as the war against the Jacobin Republic had been converted from a war of principles into a war of territorial and commercial acquisitions, then, of necessity, dissensions sprang up among the Allies. What was calculated to satisfy the ambition of one state would be matter of indifference to another; and frequently, on the settlement of territories, there would be a conflict of views and of interests. This truth he illustrates by various examples.

Coming now to the question of the proposed peace with the Regicide Republic, the author demonstrates

the dangers, moral and political, that would thence accrue to the British Government and the British people. He says that the Revolutionary Republic was not a new Power of an old kind, but a new Power of a new description ; and before it could be admitted into the fellowship of Christian states, it behoved the Governments of Europe well to examine its nature, spirit, and tendency. Here Burke draws a masterly picture of the two main factions that moved and directed the revolution—the infidel philosophers on the one hand, and the republican statesmen on the other. The former directed all their energies towards the destruction of Religion at home and abroad ; the latter, less fanatical in their irreligion, were the ardent supporters of Republicanism ; and that chiefly as an instrument for promoting and extending French influence and French dominion. “The philosophers,” he says, “were the active, internal agitators, and supplied the spirit and principles ; the second gave the practical direction. Sometimes the one predominated in the composition, sometimes the other.”*

The infidel philosophers were more open and audacious in the profession of their views ; the republican statesmen more circumspect and crafty in the execution of their plans.

These republican statesmen were themselves divided into two factions. The one desired to make France a great commercial and naval state, capable of wresting

* P. 246, vol. v., Bohn's ed.

from England the dominion of the seas; while the other sought to augment the military force of their country, and enlarge her territories, so as to make her the arbiters of the Continent, and ultimately superior to Great Britain. Both these descriptions of false diplomatists, filled with the Pagan ideas of ambitious domination, wished France to carry out those schemes of ruthless conquest, such as in the pages of their favourite authors, Machiavelli and Montesquieu, they saw accomplished by the old Roman Republic. Here Burke lays open some of the secret political causes of the French Revolution, which no other writer I am acquainted with has so ably pointed out.

The two revolutionary factions he speaks of were extremely active and influential in the forty years that preceded the great social catastrophe of 1789. The various ministers of France and the subordinate officials, the ambassadors, the *chargés d'affaires*, and the *attachés* of legations mostly belonged to one or other of these two republican factions that were contending for supremacy, and distracting the Court by their intrigues and cabals. They preferred the republican form of polity, not so much because they thought it would improve the internal administration of France, but because they conceived it calculated to extend her foreign influence, and enlarge her dominions. They contrasted the more easy and variable temper of Monarchy with the fixed, tenacious, and systematic spirit of the Republic. They felt indignant

that France should have allowed herself to be outstripped by other states, like Austria, Prussia, and Russia, in territorial acquisitions. The shameful partition of Poland, instead of exciting in them feelings of indignation, inspired them with only a sense of jealousy, that they had been deprived of a share in the scandalous spoliation. They were most inimical to the Austrian alliance, and to the Austrian match which confirmed and sealed it. The unjust and impolitic alliance with the young American Republic, instead of engendering, as is commonly supposed, a democratic spirit in the youthful nobility and in the army, was, as Burke observes, itself a fruit of the republican spirit which animated so many of the statesmen and courtiers of Versailles. The American expedition, and the relations it established between France and the new Transatlantic Democracy, tended, doubtless, to fan the pre-existing flame of revolutionary feelings. Those feelings spread rapidly through the country, but, to use our author's words, were nowhere more prevalent than in the heart of the Court. "The palace of Versailles," he further says, "seemed by its language a forum of democracy."*

Burke then shows how, constituted as France was, and informed with such a spirit of fierce, ungovernable fanaticism, she was more than a match for the European Allies. Her resources, whether moral or material, were not of an ordinary kind. Her

* P. 253.

material instruments of success, though diminished in extent, were, on the other hand, intensified by an unprincipled ambition, which trampled all law, all right, all order, under foot. And, on the other hand, the demoniacal frenzy of irreligion and of lawlessness gave to revolutionary France a preternatural strength. It was only by considering her as an *armed doctrine*, and not as an *ordinary state*, the Powers of Europe could hope to encounter her with success. It was thus, I may add, the wild fanaticism of the Moslem hosts could be checked only by the ardent, well-directed enthusiasm of the Christian Crusaders. And in the conflict with the French Revolution, Burke was endeavouring to fire the potentates of Europe with the same high, energetic, generous sentiments that in the struggle against Islam, the Popes had once enkindled in the breasts of Christian rulers and nations.

Having in this second letter analyzed the genius and character of the French Revolution, in its relations to foreign states, the author proceeds in the next to describe the rupture of the recent negotiations between the English Government and the French Directory; the humiliations experienced by British diplomacy in that transaction; and lastly, the vast resources, moral and material, which Great Britain still possessed for a successful prosecution of the war. He depicts the lamentable effects of Mr. Pitt's temporizing policy. After having neglected to afford timely succour in behalf of native allies in the very

heart of France—a succour that would have accomplished all the ends of the war, and brought it at the same time to a speedy conclusion—the British Minister compromises the dignity of the Crown in tedious, useless negotiations with an enemy who receives his advances with insolent contempt, and whose alliance, even if obtained, would be far more fatal than the most deadly hostility.

The diplomatic negotiations in which the British envoy, Lord Malmesbury, was engaged at Paris, are analysed in all their bearings on the moral and social well-being of Great Britain, and of the various European kingdoms. Here it is shown that the French Republic had been trained by domestic violence, rapine, sacrilege, and bloodshed, for inflicting the same disorders and the same atrocities on foreign countries; that though, for the time being, that Republic happened to be ruled by a set of mitigated Jacobins, the more sanguinary party might at any moment gain the ascendancy; and that amid the various changes of revolutionary factions, the Republic, one and indivisible, fought ere it subjugated them by arms, to bring all nations under its influence.

The author asks, what power, what state in Europe required such lengthened negotiations—such laboured proceedings—such solemn official declarations, whether in Parliament or by diplomatic despatch, in order to become assured of the sincerity and moderation of

the British Government on the one hand, and of the arrogance and ambition of the French Directory on the other? Taking a survey of all the countries of Europe, he shows that each and all have too severely suffered from French domination, or from the menaces of French tyranny, not to feel how well justified was Great Britain in waging war against the godless Republic.

Then looking at home, Burke enquires what party in England were these negotiations with the French Government, destined to appease or conciliate? Not the Tories, certainly—not the bulk of the Whigs, who, in order to defend religion and social order against impiety and the Revolution, had coalesced with the Tories. Such overtures towards the anarchical usurpation in France could be meant to win over only the minority in Parliament that had so long coquetted with the French Revolutionists, and re-echoed their frivolous and unjust charges against the British Government. But recent Parliamentary debates had proved that the Ministry had not succeeded in disarming the enmity of this party, nor in mollifying its resentment. “The fact is,” concludes Burke, “that neither this Ministerial declaration, nor the negotiation which is its subject, could serve any good purpose, foreign or domestic; it could conduce to no end either with regard to allies or neutrals. It tends neither to bring back the misled; nor to give courage

to the fearful ; nor to animate and confirm those who are hearty and zealous in the cause."*

The author next shows that, even if the Directory had received with common diplomatic courtesy the pacific overtures of the British Government, no satisfactory results could have been obtained. The object of all former treaties of peace had been to secure a balance of power between the different states of Europe. "This balance," says Burke, "was regarded in four principal points of view :—the great middle balance, which comprehended Great Britain, France, and Spain ; the balance of the North ; the balance external and internal, of Germany ; and the balance of Italy. In all those systems of balance, England was the power to whose custody it was thought it might most safely be committed. France, as she happened to stand, secured the balance, or endangered it."† So far Mr. Burke.

But the idea of the balance of power, scouted from the first by the ardent partisans of the Revolution, was incompatible with the very being of the anarchic Republic, which aimed, either by arms or by secret manœuvres, at universal domination. So far from wishing to restore, this Republic sought to obliterate every vestige of the ancient contracts, treaties, pacts, and conventions between the European States, and the whole body of international laws, rights, and doctrines on which such compacts rested. It sought

* P. 292-3, vol. v.

† P. 303, vol. v.

to defend and secure its own existence by means of a group of kindred Republics, constituted in a like manner, and informed with a like spirit, as itself.

And supposing even that the French Directory was willing to give up its ambitious designs, and to renounce that doctrinal profelytism, which was of the very essence of the Revolution; what equivalents could Great Britain offer to that Government for the relinquishment of its present possessions? What had Great Britain to give in exchange for the Netherlands, Holland, and the Rhenish Germany conquered by the arms of the French Republic?

All former treaties of general pacification were more or less based on a system of exchanges, in order to secure and confirm that balance of power which was their main and ultimate object.

The author next proves that the English Ministry could not plead, as a motive for entering into negotiations with the Regicide Republic, the failing resources of the British empire. Here he adduces statistical tables, and enters at great length into minute details, to prove the growing prosperity of all classes of the British community. He demonstrates the steady increase in the numbers of the lower orders, in the amount of their wages and earnings, and in their general well-being. He points to the growing wealth of the upper and middle classes, as shown in their mode of living, in their apparel, their habitations, and their equipages. In all these ranks of life, he con-

tends, luxury manifests itself in a proportionate degree of splendour.

The great improvements in husbandry—the more extended operations of trade—and the progressive skill, as well as the increase in the number of industrial establishments, are alleged as yet stronger proofs of the national prosperity. The steady rise in the imports and exports of the empire, in the products of the excise, as well as the increasing facility with which the taxes were collected, are brought forward as tokens of the same satisfactory state of things.

From the material prosperity of the British nation as here shown, Burke infers its full capability for sustaining the arduous struggle in which it was then engaged. And that its spirit kept pace with its physical resources; that its courage was unflagging, and its energy unbroken; that it was resolved to carry on the contest, on whose issue depended its religion, its laws, its liberties, its independence, every blessing, moral and social, which rendered existence valuable, was proved by the alacrity with which it had subscribed to the national loan, as well as by the vast majority of representatives it had recently sent to Parliament, pledged to the support of the war.

Such is a summary of the contents of this admirable work, the “Letters on a Regicide Peace.” If these Letters may not abound in so many profound remarks as the “Reflections on the Revolution,” they surpass that book in rapid, vigorous argumentation,

and equal at least, if they do not excel it, in the splendour of the eloquence. Now and then, indeed, we meet with a harsh or overstrained metaphor, or are fatigued with an excess of amplification.


Such was the plan of warfare against the French Revolution, as recommended by Burke. Had his counsels been followed in 1793 and 1794, the war would have had a prompt as well as a successful issue. And so those writers do grievous wrong to the memory of this illustrious statesman, who assert that he was the chief author of a bloody and protracted conflict of five-and-twenty years.

Mismanaged, however, as the war was in its early stages, it yet arrayed the pride and prejudices, as well as the patriotism, of the British people against the anti-religious and anti-social doctrines of the French Revolution, and so served to keep off the moral contagion from our shores.

On the French invasion of Spain in 1808, the followers of Pitt, Mr. Canning, and afterwards the Marquess Wellesley sent prompt military aid to the loyalists and patriots of that country. And though the Revolution was then embodied in the person of one man, and that man gifted with a wonderful military genius, and commanding the resources of half Europe, yet the English, Irish, and Scotch troops, led by a great Captain, and co-operating with a noble people, that under the most adverse circumstances had risen up in defence of its altars, its throne, and

its liberties, drove back the French in less than six years beyond the Pyrenees. Had the same enlightened policy been pursued towards the struggling Christian patriots of La Vendée, who, though undisciplined, had in the course of eight months beaten two Republican armies, what calamities would have been spared to Europe! How different would have been the history of the last seventy years! The success of the Peninsular war is the best vindication of the anti-revolutionary policy of Edmund Burke.

FIFTH LECTURE.

URING the last twelve years of his life, three great subjects engaged the attention of Burke—the delinquencies in the Indian Administration ; the civil disabilities of Irish Catholics ; and the French Revolution in its bearings on France and on Europe. In the year 1795, he writes as follows to his friend, Sir Hercules Langrishe—"I think," says he, "I can hardly overrate the malignity of the principles of Protestant ascendancy, as they affect Ireland ; or of Indianism, as they affect these countries, and as they affect Asia ; or of Jacobinism, as they affect all Europe, and the state of human society itself. The last is the greatest evil. But it really combines with the others, and flows from them. Whatever breeds discontent at this time will produce that great master-mischief most infallibly."*

In this passage Burke points out the connection subsisting between the three great questions that in the evening of his life occupied and agitated his mind.

* *Vide* Second Letter to Sir H. Langrishe, vol. vi. p. 48, Works. Ed. 1852.

And that this statement is not fanciful, I trust I shall be able to show before the present and the next Lectures are brought to a close.*

* That the Orange-ascendancy party in Ireland is essentially, and in despite of its absurd pretensions to Conservatism, a revolutionary faction, shall be shown in the next Lecture. Now our business is with the character and the tendency of the principles which Burke calls "Indianism." By that word we must understand the tone of moral and political feeling prevalent in his time among the Anglo-Indians. What those sentiments were he explains more clearly in his tract entitled, "Thoughts on French Affairs." Here, after enumerating the descriptions of persons who in England were partisans of the French Revolution, such as most of the Protestant Dissenters, and the Atheists, Deists, and Socinians, he places in the same category, "a good many among the moneyed people, *the East Indians almost to a man*, who cannot bear to find that their present importance does not bear a proportion to their wealth." But besides this cause, their sympathy with the principles of the French Revolution had, I think, another and a deeper source than the one assigned by Burke. A very large number were then *noted* for their *religious indifference*; for too many of our countrymen, in doubling the Cape, were wont to leave religion behind them; and they were for a long time called by the Hindoos and Mohammedans, "a prayerless people." The Protestant Bishop Heber, who in 1823 visited India, confesses that Deism had long been prevalent among the English residents, but says that it was happily on the decline. Now, we have seen how warmly the English infidels, in general, supported the principles of the French Revolution; and the dissenting sect whose doctrines most closely approximated to Deism—I mean the Unitarians—were, above all other Nonconformists, conspicuous for the violence of their revolutionary politics.

Again, the Anglo-Indian admirers of the administration of Warren Hastings, long accustomed to his odious intrigues and perfidious machinations—to his disregard for the religious and charitable foundations of the people—his frequent spoliations

Burke's vigorous contest with French Jacobinism has been fully described in the last two Lectures. On the present occasion, I shall draw your attention to his efforts for the reform of the Indian Administration.

In the next, and concluding Lecture, I shall describe his exertions for bringing about the complete political enfranchisement of his Catholic fellow-countrymen in Ireland.

Before I proceed to speak of the British administration in India, and of the various reforms proposed or carried out in the government of that great dependency, it may be useful to make a few observations on that very remarkable country.

The Peninsula which stretches from the Himalayan mountains down to the Isle of Ceylon, holding, as it does, a central position between the peninsula of Arabia on the west, and that of Malacca on the east, has ever been regarded as one of the most fertile and magnificent regions of the globe. Sheltered from the icy blasts of Northern Asia by the lofty Himalayan range, and whence issue three mighty rivers, the Indus, the Ganges, and the Burrampootra, that spread fertility through its plains, this genial land is blessed with the richest variety of vegetable, mineral, and animal of the Zemindars, or gentry—his iniquitous assaults on the independence of neighbouring states—his unjust deposition and plunder of the native princes—and his cruel extermination of unoffending tribes, must have found in the foreign and domestic policy of the French Revolutionists—I speak not of the later monsters—something very congenial to their moral and political views and habits.

productions. High mountainous chains, running from west to east, and from north to south, traverse the peninsula, varying the surface of its soil, and giving birth to countless streams, that water and fertilize it in every direction. Here the palm rises with a majestic grace; the tapering bamboo trembles in its every bough; the cocoa-nut tree adorns the solitary seashore; and the banyan spreads afar its gigantic shadows, striking its pendent twigs into the earth, and thence multiplying its stems, till beneath the vast canopy of leaves,—

*“The Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds,
At loopholes cut thro’ thickest shade.”**

While in the northern parts the oaks, and pines, and other forest-trees of Europe abound, we find in the more southern districts valuable woods, like the teak, the sandal, the ebony, and others, in great profusion. The most precious plants, like the cotton-tree, the bread-tree, the rice-plant, the indigo, the pepper-tree, and the rest: fruits of the most exquisite taste and odour, like the pine-apple, the shaddock, and the mango; dyes the most brilliant, and medicinal plants and gums of the most potent efficacy; all these are the products of this most favoured region. Equally rich is it in mineral treasures; and the pearls of Ceylon and the diamonds of Golconda are unrivalled in size and splendour. The animal kingdom vies with

* Paradise Lost.

the vegetable and the mineral in the vigour, variety, and beauty of its productions.

But if in the mighty rivers which drain this land, and in the towering summits of the Himalaya, some of which rise to twenty-eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, Nature presents a truly gigantic type, the same character is here stamped on the works of man also. What shall I say of the temple-caves of Salfette and Elephanta, and of their beautiful columns, and of their countless images? What, too, of the many temples, and countless corridors, and sacerdotal chambers, carved out of the granite mountain of Ellora? What, again, of the stupendous ruins of Malipuram, near Madras, where a whole city, destroyed by an earthquake, and since in part submerged by the sea, once sprang up, hewn out of the live rock, and covering a space of more than three square leagues? These colossal architectural ruins are in keeping with the vast fabric of Hindoo mythology, whose deities, and demi-gods, and heroes, the walls of these temples and their strange sculptures represent. They are in keeping, too, with those gigantic epics, the Ramayana, and the Mahabharata, where theology and philosophy, proclaiming amid the wildest fictions of superstition the sublime truths of primeval Revelation, often breathe forth the loftiest accents of poetry. In a later age, the Hindoos produced dramatic poems as elegant and beautiful as their epics are grand.

This most ingenious and imaginative people, inferior

among the ancients to the Greeks only, ran through a like cycle of philosophic systems. In these we often find a wonderful subtlety united to the greatest depth of observation.

If in art, and poetry, and philosophy, the Hindoos achieved such mighty things, their social life is little less remarkable. Like the Egyptians and the ancient Persians, they have, from a very remote antiquity, retained the system of castes—a system closely connected with one of the predominant doctrines of their creed, the transmigration of souls. There are four divisions of castes : the first consists of the Brahmins, who constitute the priests, scholars, physicians, and judges ; the second is that of the Chatriyas, or nobles ; the third that of the Vyāṣas, or merchants, and artizans, and farmers ; and the fourth, that of the Sudras, or peasants, workmen and servants. If this institution is in some respects opposed to social progress, it yet secures to each class its specific rights, and is thus a rampart against the encroachments of military despotism. It cannot be denied, too, that it contributes towards the perfection of the mechanical arts.

From the earliest period, Hindostan seems to have been parcelled out into a number of states, great and small ; but in all these, hereditary Monarchy prevailed. The power of the Rajah, or King, however, was restricted by the influence of the sacerdotal class ; by the privileges of the nobles ; by the code of Menu, which regulated the exercise of the Royal prerogatives ; and,

lastly, by the well-defined rights of the several castes. The municipal constitution of the cities and of the townships, too, is excellent, and has survived the many revolutions that have overthrown dynasties and kingdoms in India. Proper slavery is unknown in that country ; but the fate of the hapless Pariahs, who, as the offspring of illicit marriages, or as transgressors of the religious or civil laws, have become the outcasts of society, is even more wretched and cruel than was that of slaves among the Greeks and Romans. Women in India, especially before the conquests of the Mahometans, held a higher position than in most other Pagan countries. "Women participate," says Frederick Schlegel, "in all the rights of their caste ; in the high prerogatives of Brahmins, if they are of the sacerdotal race (although there are not, and never were priestesses among the Indians, as among the other heathen nations of antiquity) ; or in the privileges of nobility, if they belong to the caste of the Chatriyas."*

Now, a few words as to the religious systems in India. Brahminism, the predominant religion, is itself divided into a number of sects. The three chief Divinities of the Hindoo Triad, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, have each had their period of ascendancy, while the inferior divinities possess their train of respective followers, divided again into the right-hand and the left-hand worshippers.

The most formidable adversary of the Brahminical

* "Philosophy of History," p. 845.

religion was Buddhism, whose founder, Gautama, some writers place in the fifth, but now the greater number in the tenth, century before the Christian era. A violent conflict took place between the followers of either religion—a conflict that issued in the expulsion of the Buddhists from the peninsula. If Brahminism had widely departed from primitive religion—if it contained many gross errors and superstitions—if it had abandoned the worship of the true God for the sensual adoration of Nature ; Buddhism, on the contrary, substituted for the worship of the natural elements a sort of personal idolatry—the adoration of the person of the high-priest of the time being.

It rejected animal sacrifices, with all their deep, mysterious symbolism. In the family, it superadded to the restricted polygamy of the Hindoos the more odious abuse of marriage, polyandry, or the plurality of husbands. In the State, by abolishing the system of castes, defective and abusive as that system was, it destroyed the last bulwarks against regal despotism. In the countries where it prevails, it has introduced among the humbler classes the lowest superstitions of sorcery and witchcraft, and among many of the higher orders a Pantheistic materialism.

When the Greeks, under Alexander the Great, and later, under Seleucus Nicator, invaded India, the followers of Buddha must have been still powerful in Hindostan, for the Greek historians name the two leading sects among the Hindoos, *Brachmanes* and

Samaneans. The last name, in the opinion of an illustrious writer, clearly refers to the Buddhists; "for among the rude nations of Central Asia the priests of Fo, or Buddha, bear to this day the name of *Schamans*."* After a fierce and protracted struggle with the followers of Brahminism, the disciples of Buddhism were, towards the fifth century of the Christian era, expelled from the peninsula; yet, under the name of Jains, a remnant are still to be found in its southern provinces. On its expulsion from Hindostan, Buddhism took refuge in the Isle of Ceylon, in Ultra-Gangetic India, in Thibet, in China, and, lastly, in Mongolia.

And now let me say a few words on the ancient history of Hindostan.

Fifty years after the dispersion of mankind from the plains of Shinar, one branch of the Arian settled on the high lands of Media; another branch advanced further eastward, and descending the lofty mountains which separate Cabul from India, took up their abode in the Vale of Cashmere. These were the ancestors of the present Hindoos.

From a very remote period a great land-trade appears to have been carried on between India, that region abounding in gold, silver, and precious stones, and the costliest products of the loom, and the countries of Western Asia. The Ophir, to which a thousand years before the Christian era, the Hebrews and

* F. Schlegel's "Philosophy of History," p. 138.

the Phœnicians navigated, was either some maritime city on the western coast of India, or perhaps a port in Arabia, to which the Arab merchants brought Indian commodities.

Long before the age of Alexander the Great, India had been an object of curiosity and marvel for the Greeks. Thither they made their Bacchus and their Hercules wander in their several peregrinations. "That country," as Frederick Schlegel says, "lay in the background of their intellectual world, as Egypt occupied the foreground." Nor did the strange stories which the historian Ctesias, who had long resided at the Persian Court, there collected about India, tend to lessen the curiosity of his Greek countrymen. When the celebrated expedition of Alexander had at last opened to their eyes this land of marvels, they saw much, both in the world of Nature and in the world of man, calculated to gratify a spirit of liberal enquiry, and to excite their admiration. The expedition of the Macedonian conqueror was attended with lasting advantages; for it gave a mighty impulse to the commerce between the Western and the Eastern world, and which endured for a long series of ages.

Three great events, according to an eminent living historian,* appear to mark the early history of India. The first consists of those migrations and those wars which led to the institution of castes. The second event is the conflicts between the Koros and the

* Cefare Cantu, "Hist. Universelle," t. i. p. 138-9.

Pandous, and which are celebrated in the two great epic poems I have already spoken of. The third event is, that mighty struggle already described between Brahminism and Buddhism, and in which the latter succumbed.

India never seems to have been formed into one monarchy, but to have been always divided, as I before said, into a number of states of greater or smaller extent. In this condition was that country found by the Greeks who accompanied Alexander, and, with the exception of a few provinces in the North, it never, until the Mussulman invasion in the tenth century of our era, bowed to the yoke of a foreign ruler.

In ancient times, and long prior to the expedition of Alexander the Great, there were two extensive and flourishing kingdoms in India, Ayodha and Magada, corresponding to the modern states of Oude and Bahar. After the times of Alexander, and of Seleucus Nicator—whose ambassador, Megasthenes, wrote a vivid account of the institutions and manners of the people on the Upper Ganges, among whom he had long dwelt—we for a long period lose sight of this interesting country. At length, during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus, we are fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of the mysterious region. To this emperor, Vicramaditya I., a monarch who ruled over a large portion of India, extending from Patna to Cashmere, sent a solemn embassy. He was worthy of exchanging regal courtesies with Augustus Cæsar, for, like him, he

was a munificent patron of letters. His Court, which he held sometimes at Benares, sometimes at Cashmere, was a brilliant academy of poets, grammarians, and philosophers. Here, we are told by Hindoo writers, shone seven pearls, that is, seven poets, of whom the brightest was Calidasa, the author of the beautiful drama of "Sacontala," which has been translated by Sir William Jones. This was the second harvest of Indian literature.

Here, again, the curtain drops ; and for a thousand years it is but the vague report of some Arab merchant which from time to time allows us to catch a glimpse of the land of marvels. At length, in the year one thousand of our era, the rude sword of the Moslem Sultan, Mahmud the Ghiznevide, who, penetrating into Hindostan, rifles her long-accumulated treasures, razes to the ground her most splendid temples, and hews down their many idols, tears away, and for ever, that curtain which had so long concealed her from our view. And this leads me to the second period of Indian history.

In the first centuries of the Hegira several tribes invaded the countries lying between Persia and the river Indus ; and the Afghans, who, originally fire-worshippers, had become zealous followers of the Koran, imitated their example. But no attempt was made to conquer the fertile regions east of the Indus.

With the commencement of the eleventh century of the Christian era, the Mussulmen make systematic

efforts to carry into India their arms and their creed. And it is from this period dates a more connected history of that country. The Turkish Sultan, Mahmud the Ghiznevide, was the son of a foldier, named Sebektegin, who had been proclaimed by the army Monarch of Ghizni. Mahmud, one of the most able, as well as fanatical and warlike, princes that ever sat on a Moslem throne, was the first conqueror, since Seleucus Nicator, that had penetrated to the Indian provinces watered by the Ganges. He made twelve expeditions to various parts of India, defeated powerful armies of its confederate princes, destroyed many idols and beautiful temples, amassed vast treasures in gold, silver, and precious stones, and returned to his country laden with spoils, and followed by long trains of hapless captives. He was munificent in his largesses; he built mosques and colleges at Ghizni, and founded an university, and encouraged learning. He was not oppressive to his subjects; and many acts of magnanimity are recorded of him. But his invasions, destructive as they were, gave India a sad foretaste of those miseries of foreign conquest it was henceforth her lot to endure. But beyond the North-Western provinces of that country this Sultan made no permanent acquisitions.

He died in the year 1028, and was succeeded on the throne by his son, Massud. The incursions of Tartar tribes that threatened destruction to the empire of Ghizni, prevented this sovereign from profe-

cuting further conquests in the interior parts of India. In the year 1171 Yeasuddin, King of Gaur, in Kho-rassan, conquered the countries west of the Indus, and Mohammed, his brother, took Lahore, and put to death the last monarch of the family of the Ghiznevites, Khofrou II. Mohammed pushed farther his conquests in India, established his sway in the Northern provinces, and made the city of Delhi the seat of government.

In the thirteenth century, Gengis-Khan and his countless hordes overran all Asia; but, happily, did not penetrate beyond the western banks of the Indus. Yet, under his successors, the Moguls made many inroads into Hindostan; but they were repulsed by the strenuous efforts of different princes of the Gaurian dynasty. By the death of Kaikobad, who was assassinated in the year 1289, that Gaurian dynasty, after having for one hundred and seventeen years ruled over Northern India, became extinct. The sceptre passed to the Patan or Afghan rulers. The first sovereign of the new dynasty, Firoz II., was the first foreign prince who ever invaded and subdued any portion of the Deccan. One of his successors, in 1295, defeated the Moguls, subdued the Rajpoots, and brought the greater part of the Deccan under his sway. But in the reigns of his weak successors, many Hindoo rajahs in Bengal and in the Deccan recovered their independence. The invasion of Hindostan by the Mogul Emperor, Tamerlane, gave a severe blow to the power of these Afghan

rulers. After the departure of that emperor, who made but a brief sojourn in Hindostan, a number of petty states sprang up, recognizing only in name the authority of the monarchs of Delhi. Baber, a descendant of the Emperor Tamerlane, witnessing the confusion prevailing in the country, took that capital in 1526, and put an end to the Afghan dynasty. This able prince, the founder of the Mogul Empire in India, cultivated alike the arts of war and of peace, and neglected nothing which could conduce to the prosperity and glory of the State.

But it was not till the reign of the Emperor Akber, the ablest and the wisest Mohammedan prince that ever ruled in India, or perhaps in any kingdom of wide-spread Islam, the Mogul Empire could be said to be well consolidated. The equity of his rule has caused his name to be blessed by Hindoos as well as by Mohammedans, even down to the present day. In his reign, his chief minister compiled an excellent political and statistical survey of the empire, entitled "The Ayeen Akbery." The Emperor Akber died in the year 1605.

Under his successors there were many intestine commotions; but in despite of these disorders, material prosperity and intellectual culture made considerable advances.

The greatest sovereign who, since the death of Akber, had mounted on the Mogul throne, was the Emperor Aurungzebe. He commenced his reign in the

year 1659. He conquered the cities of Hyderabad, Bejapore, and Golconda, and extended his dominions nearly to the limits of the Carnatic. He was a monarch fonder even than most Moslem princes of pomp and ostentation ; lavish in expenditure, but cold, cruel, and selfish in his policy. His oppression of the Hindoos enkindled their deepest enmity, and raised up formidable foes on every side. In his reign the Mahrattas, destined to be the avengers of their oppressed creed and country, first rose to power. The founder of their empire was Sevajee, who died in the year 1682.

From the death of Aurungzebe, which occurred in the year 1707, date the agonies of an empire which had long been suffering from internal decay. Under his successors that empire was convulsed by intestine commotions. The Deccan becomes virtually independent ; the Rohillas, an Afghan race, wrest a considerable tract from the Emperor. The Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah, devastates the Northern provinces, and plunders Delhi ; the Rajpoots, the Seiks, and the Mahrattas descend from their mountain fastnesses, and, like hungry vultures, hover round the dying monarchy, and ere its life be extinct, begin to lacerate its members. With Shah Alum II., who became the pensioner of the British East India Company, the Mogul Empire may be said to have expired.

So perished, after a brief period of prosperity and glory, one of the most splendid empires in the history of Islam. Like all the Moslem Monarchies, it was

founded and sustained for a time by great natural virtues—by courage, fortitude, magnanimity, and talent, and can exhibit some rulers endowed with great capacity, and remarkable for their wisdom and justice. But soon all the vices and errors which Islam fosters, especially among the great, the love of pomp and luxury, the insatiable thirst of wealth, unbridled sensuality, unlimited despotism in the family and in the State, the inextinguishable lust of war, all-grasping ambition, the fierce intolerance of alien creeds and races, the endless intrigues of the seraglio, the heart-burning jealousies among kinsmen and brothers, their deadly contests, the assassinations, the rebellions, the revolutions, which fill the sad history of Mohammedan States, first enervated, and then destroyed the Empire of the Great Mogul. And here, moreover, Islam had to contend not only with its own inherent vices, but with the antagonism of the hostile religions and races of India.

Before I speak of the first conquests of the British in that country, it will be necessary to take a rapid glance at the various European settlements, which were there made from the commencement of the sixteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth.

It was in the early period of the Mogul Empire, the maritime discoveries of the Portuguese brought about the great commercial changes that were ultimately to be attended with such important political revolutions in Eastern Asia.

Those noble descendants of the Visigoths, who occupied the South-western extremity of the Iberian Peninsula, had, by a series of heroic efforts, at last succeeded in driving from their territory the Moslem hosts. Shut out by the great Christian kingdoms of Spain from all adventurous enterprise on the East, they turned their eyes to the West ; and, glancing over the wide expanse of ocean, resolved to discover and conquer the unknown isles and continents that lay beyond it. A noble Monarch, John I., and his still more enterprising son, Henry the Navigator, glowing with a love of science, and still more with a zeal for the glory of God, directed the energies of their nation to maritime discovery. Learned men were invited to the Court of Lisbon ; maps, and charts, and astronomical instruments, and books on geography and nautical science were collected ; and naval expeditions, in some of which Prince Henry himself took a part, were planned and accomplished. A succession of bold and skilful navigators arose, whose achievements shed a lasting glory on their country. The names of Bartholomew Diaz, of Cabral, and of Vasco da Gama can never die. These seamen and other adventurous comrades thread the Western coasts of Africa, and doubling Cape Bojador, discover in succession the Island of Madeira, the Azores, and the Cape Verd Isles, which they subsequently colonize, as well as the coasts of Gambia and of Senegal, on the African continent. Civil commotions having for a time interrupted these nautical en-

terprizes, they were, in 1481, resumed by King John II. The equatorial line is crossed; the extreme Southern promontory of Africa is descried by Diáz; Cabral, shunning its tempestuous coast, veers Westward, and touching on the American shores, discovers the vast and fertile land of Brazil, which he claims on behalf of his Royal master. At length the dauntless courage and perseverant energy of Portugal are crowned with success; and the Cape of Storms, since called the Cape of Good Hope, is doubled by the daring spirit of Vasco da Gama. He sails across the Indian ocean, and lands at Calicut, on the Malabar coast. His first expedition was one of discovery; but on his second visit to India, he lays, by the establishment of a fort at Calicut, the foundations of the Portuguese Empire in India.

Under his successors, Almeida, Francis Albuquerque, and especially his brother, the great Alfonso Albuquerque, the Portuguese factories in India were gradually extended and consolidated. The genius of the last-named great man it was who, distinguished alike as a warrior and a statesman, gave unity and cohesion to the Colonial settlements of Portugal. These had been successively formed on the coasts and in the isles of Africa, then on the Western coast of Hindostan, at Calicut, Cochin, Goa, which henceforth became the centre of the Portuguese possessions in India, at Bombay, Salfette, and at Diu in Guzerat, and even as far as Ormus, in the Persian Gulf; and then on divers

points of the Eastern coast of Coromandel, and in Bengal itself. After the death of the great Albuquerque, this enterprizing people penetrated into the Indian Archipelago, and there founded factories in the Molucca Isles, as well as in Borneo, Java, and Sumatra. They at last settled in Canton, in China, and obtained freedom of trade with Japan. Thus, in about thirty or forty years after the Cape of Good Hope had been doubled, the Portuguese settlements, from Madeira to Japan, stretched over a hundred and fifty degrees of longitude. The monopoly of the whole Indian trade was in the hands of the Portuguese; and the stream of Eastern wealth flowed into the port of Lisbon.

But this glorious period of Portugal perished with the death of the chivalric Monarch, Don Sebastian, and with her annexation to Spain, in the year 1580. The Spanish King, Philip II., suspended the Cortes of Portugal, removed her ordnance and ships of war to his own country, dismantled her fortresses, and closed her ports against the Dutch, who had revolted against him. The latter sought their revenge by seizing on the Portuguese colonies in the Indian Archipelago, and thus gaining possession of the spice trade.

From this period, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, commences the rapid downfall of the Portuguese power in the East. That power had been already undermined by the rapacity of the governors, who, in their short tenure of office, sought to make riches; (an example too faithfully followed by the sub-

ordinate officials ;) as well as by the matrimonial alliances of the Portuguese with the natives, which led to a speedy degeneracy, moral and physical, of the European race.

The establishment of the East India Company in Holland gave a strong impulse to the commercial operations of its subjects in Asia. In their war on the Portuguese colonies they were aided by the native powers, and thus they wrested from the former the city of Calicut, and several important places on the coast of Coromandel. They took possession of the Molucca Isles, and built the city of Batavia, in Java. They formed settlements in the Cape of Good Hope, and in the Isle of Ceylon, and entered into commercial relations with the empire of Japan—a privilege which, shameful to say, they purchased by the utter repudiation of Christianity.

For a century and a half the Dutch enjoyed nearly a monopoly of the spice trade, as well as of other East Indian commodities. But the frequent changes of their Governors-General in these colonies—the mal-administration of their Company's finances—and the commercial rivalry of the English, brought about the decline of the Republic's Indian trade. The Dutch had never aimed at political predominance, but solely at a commercial monopoly in the East.

In the sixteenth, and in the early part of the seventeenth century, the French made some feeble attempts at colonization in Eastern Asia. The great Minister,

Colbert, in the reign of Louis XIV., founded in France an East India Company. This Corporation established factories successively in Surat, near Bombay, in the Isle of Ceylon, and in the Island of Madagascar. But these establishments, from one cause or another, not proving successful, the French took possession of the town of S. Thomas, on the Coromandel coast, and at last built the city of Pondichéry, in the Carnatic. This city, which was most advantageously situated, became henceforth the centre of the French factories in India, and was, indeed, one of the most populous and flourishing of European possessions in the whole peninsula.

The first Governor who organized this settlement was Martin, whose rule is described as very equitable and wise. His successor was Dumas, who annexed to the French possessions those important islands in the Indian ocean, Bourbon and the Mauritius, and who even entered into diplomatic relations with the Great Mogul. The French factories had in the meantime to encounter the jealous commercial rivalry of the Dutch and English, and (whenever war happened to break out between the mother-countries), their active hostility. Dupleix, who succeeded Dumas in the governorship of Pondichéry, and who was possessed of high statesmanlike talents, conceived the bold project of founding on the ruins of the Mogul Empire a vast French dominion in Southern India. The French, like the English, were gradually led, by force of cir-

cumstances, to pass from the counting-house to the field and the cabinet—from the occupations of trade to the business of diplomacy and of war. For the commercial operations of either nation could not be secured and consolidated without extensive factories; but these necessitated the acquisition of cities and of territories, which, again, required negotiations with the native Powers—negotiations that sooner or later must terminate in wars, either with those Powers themselves, or with their many rivals and opponents. Even when the home Governments were at peace, the French and the English factories in India sometimes carried on warfare with each other. There was a regular system of alliances and of counter-alliances, the French and the English aiding and abetting their mutual enemies.

Dupleix on one occasion supported the claims of one of the pretenders to the Viceroyalty of the Decan. He assisted him with French troops and Indian sepoy, disciplined after the European fashion, that gained over his adversaries a brilliant victory. Almost every part of the Carnatic fell to the share of the Protégé of France. In the war that broke out between the French and English Governments in the year 1743, Dupleix defended Pondichéry for forty-two days against the combined attacks of an English land and naval force, and succeeded in repulsing them. La Bourdonnaye, who was at that time Governor of the Mauritius, carried succour to Dupleix, in Pondichéry;

and by a successful siege of the city of Madras, he forced the English to capitulate. This convention, whereby, under certain conditions, La Bourdonnaye engaged to cede Madras to our people, Dupleix judged fit to quash. This act led to warm remonstrances on the part of the former, who, when he returned to the Mauritius, found he had been superseded in the command of the island by the imperious Dupleix. Thus the excellent La Bourdonnaye, whose wise and equitable rule of the Isle of France has received from the author of "Paul and Virginia," the due meed of praise, was compelled to return to his native country. There, after an unjust detention of several years in the Bastille, his innocence was recognized, and he was restored to freedom; but alas! his fortune was ruined.

In gratitude for the services rendered to him by Dupleix, the new Nizam, Mirzapha Jung, made the French Governor of Pondichéry ruler of all the territory, extending from the river Kristna to Cape Comorin, and containing a population of thirty millions of souls. Inflated with success, Dupleix indulged in too many visionary schemes, till at last the French East India Company, finding his policy involved it in debt, procured from the Government his recall. With tears he bade farewell to the scene of his former labours and glory, and, when he arrived in France, he in vain sought for the recovery of thirteen million francs, which out of his own purse he had advanced to the Company. To the eternal disgrace of

the French Government, this great man, whose genius, if unfettered, would have given to France a tropical empire, was allowed to die in poverty and neglect. His death occurred at Paris in the year 1763.

The successor of Dupleix in the Governorship of French India was Count Lally, a gentleman of Irish descent. He had proved himself on many occasions a brave and able general ; but he was, unfortunately, of a temper impetuous and violent, unconciliating in his manners and behaviour, and so devoid of statesmanlike tact and skill, that he showed an utter disregard for the religious feelings and customs of the Hindoos. He was after some time recalled from his post, brought to trial on the charge of cowardice, and of betrayal of the interests of his King and country, and most unjustly condemned to death by the Parliament of Paris. This iniquitous sentence was, through the efforts of his son, Count Lally Tollendal, reversed in 1778 by King Louis XVI. ; and the memory of this gallant and skilful officer, who, in the battle of Fontenoy, and in India also, had rendered distinguished services to his country, was rehabilitated.

Such, alas ! was the fate which the wretched Government of Louis XV. reserved for the skilful statesmen and the brave officers who served the cause of France in India.

In administrative and military talents, Dupleix, La Bourdonnaye, and Buffly were fully equal to Clive, Warren Hastings, and Eyre Coote. Had the

views and projects of those able Frenchmen been warmly backed and seconded by the government of Louis XV., then side by side with a British empire in Northern India, the world might perhaps have beheld a French dominion established in the Deccan. But such an empire, like the other French colonies, would doubtless have been overthrown and shattered to pieces by the great revolutionary earthquake of 1789.

Having now described the foreign European factories and conquests in India, it is time briefly to recount the rise and early growth of the British power in that country.

The East India Company was founded in England in the year 1600.

Early in the reign of James I., Sir Thomas Roe was sent on a solemn embassy to the Court of the Great Mogul at Delhi. He was very successful in the object of his mission, and obtained leave for the establishment of an English factory at Surat, as well as the privilege of the Company to appoint agents at the principal ports of the Mogul empire.

On the marriage of King Charles II. with the Princess Catherine of Portugal, that monarch received as portion of her dowry the island of Bombay. The island was shortly afterwards ceded by the Crown to the East India Company, which accordingly transferred to that city the presidency over all its settlements on the western coast of India. And this honour Bombay has ever since retained.

On the eastern side of the peninsula, there was an extensive English factory at Masulipatam, the chief emporium for the cottons and muslins of Bengal. And in Bengal itself, the English possessed in the vicinity of Portuguese, Danish, and Dutch settlements, a factory in the city of Hoogley, situate on the river of that name.

In course of time, these possessions on the eastern coast were considerably enlarged. The British factory in Bengal became by its wealth so powerful as to be able to afford occasional aid to the rajahs, when they were at war with the Mogul emperor. For such services, they received from the Hindoo princes considerable tracts of land. And though the Emperor Aurungzebe was exceedingly incensed with these merchants, yet knowing the value of their trade, he found it expedient, when he made peace with the rajahs, to confirm and enlarge the grants they had made. "Those connected villages," says the author of the curious and interesting work, entitled "*Pictorial India*," "Chuttanattgee, Govindpore, and Calcutta, were ceded to the British factory; and those villages being fortified, received in honour of King William III. the name of Fort William."

The Emperor Farokshir, in 1715, in gratitude for his recovery, through the medical skill of an English physician at the Court of Delhi, bestowed on the English merchants at Madras three villages, with the right of purchasing thirty-seven townships in Bengal, and

of conveying their goods through the province free of duty. "About seven years," continues the writer just cited, "after the death of the Emperor Farokshir, the Company was permitted to establish a court of justice, consisting of a mayor and nine aldermen, at each of the three presidencies, Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta." *

Such were the small beginnings of that mighty Indian empire afterwards ruled by the merchant-princes of London. Here we see trickling from the rock the little stream that flowing down the mountain side descends into the plain, swells by degrees into a mighty river, which sweeps majestically along, growing broader and broader in its bed, and spreading fertility, and sometimes devastation too, in its course. The great man was now born, whose genius was to combine and raise our scattered mercantile settlements into an imperial state, destined, in the course of about sixty or seventy years, to absorb into itself nearly all the vast, populous, and wealthy kingdoms of Hindostan. Truly might a German writer say, "this empire, in its constitution, is in the world's history without a precedent." †

The great man I allude to was Lord Clive.

Robert Clive was born in Shropshire, in 1725. His parents obtained for him, in his eighteenth year, a writership in the service of the East India Company ;

* "Pictorial India," p. 200, Bohn, London, 1854.

† Frederick Schlegel. "Philosophy of History."

and accordingly, in the year 1744, he failed for the Presidency of Madras. At first a writer in the civil service, he soon exchanged the labours of the desk for the toils of the camp. At the siege of Pondichéry, and afterwards in Tanjore, Clive distinguished himself by his military conduct. His colonel strongly recommended him to the notice of the East India Company, as well as of the British Government. It was also to the skill and courage of this young officer the taking of the city of Arcot was chiefly to be ascribed. Shortly afterwards, the state of his health compelling him to return to England, he was, on his arrival, highly complimented by the Directors of the East India Company.

In 1755, Clive went out again to India, but on this occasion he had been appointed Governor of Fort S. David, and created a lieut.-colonel in the King's service.

In the meantime, a viceroy of the Mogul emperor, the Nabob of Bengal, Surajah Dowlah, a cruel tyrant, animated by the most deadly hatred of the English, attacked Calcutta, overcame its feeble garrison, and disappointed in not finding the treasures he had been led to expect, perpetrated on the chief captives an act of atrocious barbarity. This deed became the immediate occasion of the downfall of Mohammedan rule in India. One hundred and fifty-six prisoners were thrown into a hole twenty feet square, with scarcely any aperture, and at the height of summer, in the sultry climate of Bengal. This was the famous Black Hole of Calcutta.

The guards, though tempted by the largest bribes, declined to disturb the slumbers of the Nabob, and to acquaint him with the dreadful condition of the captives. After a night of intolerable agony, during which one victim after another succumbed to horrible sufferings, twenty-three at sunrise still retained the semblance of life. Summoned to the presence of the Nabob, those who were thought still to conceal treasures were loaded with fetters; the rest were dismissed. The factory at Madras, when they received the dreadful intelligence of the fate of their fellow-countrymen at Calcutta, were filled with the utmost indignation. They resolved to revenge them on their cruel enemies, and immediately despatched to Calcutta a naval and military force, under the respective command of General Clive and Admiral Watson. The English recovered Calcutta, and stormed and sacked the city of Hoogley.

The Committee, which directed the political operations of the war, was inclined to accept the overtures of peace proffered by Surajah Dowlah. But Clive and other members deemed all negotiations with so wicked and perfidious a prince, guilty of such enormous cruelties towards their fellow-countrymen, at once dishonourable and futile. The public and private vices of the Nabob inspired all classes of his subjects with disgust and abhorrence; and some influential men, including one of his ministers and a general, entered into a conspiracy against him. The

plot was communicated to the English. It was agreed that the latter should aid in the deposition of the Nabob; and that his general, Meer Jaffier, on granting ample compensation to the Company and its servants, and a liberal donative to its military and naval forces, should be by their assistance established on the vacant throne.

Relying on the co-operation of the conspirators in the enemy's camp, Clive addressed a hostile letter to the Nabob, in which he recapitulated his wrongs and cruelties towards the British, and then advanced with his troops to meet the foe. Meantime, Meer Jaffier did not fulfil his engagement to bring over his division of troops to the English camp. So Clive and his officers were thrown into a state of the deepest perplexity. The force of the enemy amounted to sixty thousand men, including a numerous cavalry, and much heavy ordnance. To this large army Clive had but three thousand men to oppose; and though they were disciplined after the European fashion, and commanded by English officers, one thousand only were of our nation. In despite of such fearful odds, and of the treachery of the confederates in the hostile camp, Clive, after some hours' hesitation, resolved to risk an engagement. Accordingly he marched his troops to Plassey, not far from Calcutta; and there, with a loss of but twenty-two men, gained that memorable victory which laid the foundations of the British empire in India.

The enemy were dispersed in an hour ; and the wretched Nabob, who had fled in disguise, was caught and brought into the presence of the English general. Meer Jaffier was with solemn state placed by Clive on the throne of Bengal ; and the captive prince, on whose behalf no stipulation appears to have been made, was delivered up into the hands of his rival, and put to death by his orders.

Not long after the battle of Plassey, Meer Jaffier began to intrigue with the Dutch against his benefactors. To carry out this hostile project, the Dutch sent to one of their settlements on the banks of the Hoogley a strong naval and military force. Clive penetrating their design, attacked them with great promptitude and vigour by land and sea, routed and dispersed their troops and vessels, and forced them to a speedy capitulation.

In all the military operations I have just briefly recounted, Clive, doubtless, exhibited an amazing amount of courage, energy, boldness, and skill. The humble clerk had grown into a general of the first order.

But these high achievements had been stained by several acts of the grossest perfidy and fraud, in one case carried even to forgery. These acts, which I have not time to relate, Lord Macaulay, in his interesting biography of this general, has duly appreciated.

As to the splendid gifts in money and jewels which Clive received from the Nabob he had set up on the

throne of Bengal, it is to be observed, that they were accepted at a time when the East India Directors allowed their servants, civil and military, to traffic for themselves ; and when the British Parliament had enacted no law against the acceptance of such gifts. And the fact that Clive himself deemed such acceptance perfectly justifiable, is shown by his not attempting to make any concealment of the matter. These extenuating circumstances are well brought out by Lord Macaulay ; but still, as he shows, the act was not in itself justifiable, and furnished an example fraught with the most dangerous consequences.*

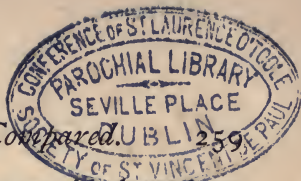
Three months after his great victory Clive returned to England. He was received with acclamations by his countrymen. The King honoured him with an interview, and bestowed on him an Irish peerage. The most distinguished personages of the realm (and among others, the illustrious Chatham) were delighted to form his acquaintance. In splendour of fortune, and in Parliamentary influence and connexions, he was able to vie with the wealthiest Peers.

During his five years' absence from India, however, enormous abuses had sprung up in the British administration of that country. Frightful exactions had been practised on the natives by the Company's servants ; immense fortunes had been thus suddenly amassed ; nearly every branch of trade and industry was mono-

* A much healthier moral tone pervades this author's biography of Clive than that of Warren Hastings.

polished by them or by their agents ; many of the principalities of India had been set up to sale ; the public revenue was falling off ; and luxury and insubordination were spreading in the army. This state of things called for the application of prompt and vigorous measures. Appointed by the Court of Directors Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the British possessions in Bengal, Lord Clive repaired in 1765 to his post. On his arrival at Calcutta, he interdicted the Company's servants, civil and military, the acceptance of any gifts from the native powers ; guarded them against the temptations to illicit gain by liberal salaries out of a branch of the public revenue ; put down cabals and disaffection in the army ; and by cashiering officers guilty of insubordination, restored its discipline. The relations of the Company with the Indian princes, also, were placed on a better footing ; for the name of Clive had struck terror into the hearts of these potentates, checked their machinations, and scattered their hostile confederacies.

In the course of eighteen months the English Governor of Bengal had accomplished wide and searching reforms. He had also displayed a rare disinterestedness ; and of a legacy of sixty thousand pounds sterling bequeathed to him by Meer Jaffier, he allotted the interest to the widows and orphans of those officers of the Company who had fallen or been invalided in its service. Had the wise administrative measures of Lord Clive been maintained, the mis-



Clive and Hastings Compared.

demeanours of Warren Hastings would have been utterly impossible.

If, in the early part of his career, Clive had been guilty of some acts of gross dissimulation and fraud ; and by the acceptance of immense gifts from the Indian prince whom he had placed on a vacant throne—an acceptance for which he had not received the formal sanction of the Directors—he may be fairly taxed with great indelicacy of feeling, to use the mildest phrase ; yet was his administration ever free from the crimes which dishonoured the government of Hastings. Burke always made a distinction between the misdemeanours committed by the former in the first conquest of the country, and the acts of injustice, violence, and cruelty perpetrated by the latter in a time of settled rule.

The state of his health requiring his return to Europe, Lord Clive bade his last farewell to the country—the scene of his military glories—in the year 1767. His career it is unnecessary to pursue any further, as the history of the British conquests and settlements in India has now been brought down nearly to the period when those Parliamentary inquiries into Indian affairs were instituted, which it will now be my duty to describe ; inquiries in which the subject of this biography bore so prominent a part.

In concluding this rapid historical sketch of India, and before resuming the thread of biographical narrative, it may be well to ask ourselves, what was the

providential purpose of all those splendid acquisitions in eastern Asia, that fell to the lot of the various European states, that have been passed under review? Was the design of Divine Providence in bestowing these temporal advantages on Christian nations, solely to increase their wealth and power, and to enhance their military glory? Was this great movement of nations intended only to subserve worldly ends? Was this close intercourse between Christians and Heathens to be attended with no spiritual results? The great men, at least, who commenced this movement did not think so. The Portuguese King, John I. and his illustrious son, Prince Henry the Navigator, and their successors, John II. and Emmanuel, and their celebrated admirals already spoken of, in striving to open the portals of the East to their country, fought other treasures, besides gold and silver and precious stones. As it was religious zeal that impelled the generous spirit of Columbus and of his compeers athwart the stormy ocean to the Western world, so it was the same exalted sentiment that expanded the sails of Cabral, and Diaz, and Vasco da Gama; which made them, in the words of the English poet:—

*“For many a day and many a joyless night,
Fight the mad waves that beat upon the Cape.”*

It was the love of God which inspired them—the thirst for the salvation of immortal souls—the love

of Christ and of His kingdom—a love that, like a perpetual fire, burned within their souls, and gave shape and colour to all their human aspirations, views, and efforts. They fought to carry the heavenly light to those sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death ; to plant the banner of the Crucified amid the gods of pride, and lust, and cruelty ; to preach deliverance to the captives of error, to give sight to the blind, and remove from their eyes the film of superstition.

The same vessels which carried to Asia, as well as to America, the warrior and the statesman, and the merchant, bore also the messenger of good tidings—the preacher of the Gospel. And among the zealous and holy missionaries, whom Portugal took to India, there was one, whom a Protestant writer has called “the greatest apostle that hath arisen among men since the days of Paul of Tarsus.” This was the mighty saint, called the “Apostle of the Indies,” who by his zeal and energy, and gift of tongues, and stupendous power over nature, revived the wonders of the apostolic age. With his own hand S. Francis Xavier baptized a million souls, and scattered far and near on the coasts and in the valleys of Hindostan, and even in the remote Japan, the seeds of the Gospel. His companions and other missionaries planted even in China itself flourishing communities of Christians.

To confine myself to India only, the immediate subject of our inquiries, Catholic missions under the

protection of the Portuguese, and afterwards of the French Government, were established in the Deccan, and became flourishing, and have in great part survived even to this day. The policy of the Dutch was extremely adverse to their growth, and indeed to the diffusion of any form of Christianity. In Asia, as in America, too, the bad example of Europeans has been a great obstacle to the progress of the Gospel.

The suppression of the Society of Jesus in the middle of the last century, and the total abolition of all religious orders in that dreadful persecution of the Church that occurred in France and in the neighbouring countries at the close of the same century, gave a deadly blow to Catholic missions all over the world.

But within the last forty years the missionary spirit has revived with tenfold vigour. The French Church has in this holy work taken the lead; and the Irish Church, amid all her difficulties and distractions at home, has evinced that zeal for the propagation of the Gospel, which has distinguished her from the earliest times.

The vessels of England transport not only Irish, but foreign Catholic missionaries to various parts of the Pagan world; and so, under Divine Providence, she is made instrumental in carrying out a blessed work.

But what part is my country destined to bear in the evangelization of Heathen lands, and more especially of that vast empire which doubtless for great and wise ends hath been entrusted to her? In

the early part of the Middle Age no country, save Ireland, laboured so earnestly and successfully in the conversion of the Heathen ; and even since her unhappy defection from the Church, she has in the same field evinced a zeal and a generosity that attest her ancient character. Her labours, however, have since then remained utterly sterile, because she has lost her mission ; she could work no signs because the Holy Spirit no longer dwelt with her ; she put forth an uncertain sound—a perplexed and contradictory utterance to the Heathen, because the home in which she was bred was “a house of bondage and a Babel of confusion.” But let her only return to that Father’s house, from which she has been so long estranged, and for which she now begins so ardently to yearn ; let her receive that Father’s blessing ; and forthwith girding her loins, and linked hand-in-hand with her Western sister, she will with her march forth to the spiritual conquest of the Eastern world. They will there find all the materials of a great Christian Mission prepared to their hands. Mankind will then understand why Providence has annexed the vast Indian empire to two islands of the remote Christian West.

I will now enter on the narrative of Parliamentary transactions relative to the affairs of India.

Towards the close of the American war, the affairs of that country much engaged the attention of the Government and the Parliament. There were two

Committees of the House of Commons occupied in the investigation of the alleged abuses in the Company's administration of that country. One was entitled a Secret Committee, the other a Select Committee; over the former Dundas presided—over the latter, Burke. To India Burke for many years devoted his unwearied attention. Of the history of Hindoostan, the various races which inhabited it, the several classes whereof they were composed, the two prevailing systems of religion which had there long contended for supremacy, the political institutions, laws, manners, customs, trade, manufactures, and agriculture of the different states of that vast Peninsula, he possessed a knowledge such as few Europeans of the eighteenth century, even resident in India, could boast. "All India," justly observes Lord Macaulay, "was present to the eye of his mind, from the halls where suitors laid gold and perfume at the feet of sovereigns, to the wild moor, where the gypsy camp was pitched, from the bazaar, humming like a bee-hive with the crowd of buyers and sellers, to the jungle where the lonely courier shakes his bunch of iron rings to scare away the hyænas."* India, indeed, was a theme which for many years engrossed all the energies of his mind. "At all hours and seasons," he says, "in the retirements of summer, in the avocations of the winter, and even amid the snows" (alluding to the ill-reception he frequently at this time met with in Parliament) that

* "Life of W. Hastings," p. 88.

had lately been showering on his head, he was labouring to vindicate the rights of a remote people, whose faces he had never beheld, and with whom he had no connection of race or creed.

In the prosecution of this business, he was equally assiduous in the Parliamentary Committee over which he presided, and in his place in the House of Commons. The civil government of British India, the administration of justice, the revenue, the taxation, the agriculture, trade, and industry of the people, their social condition, the wars between the Company and the native princes, the treaties of peace, and the several alliances entered into with those rulers—in fine, the whole tangled system of Indian politics, foreign and internal, were all submitted to the searching inquiry of the Committee whereof he was the head and the soul. In the investigation of this complex subject, Burke, on whom the most laborious portion of the Committee's work devolved, had to examine the voluminous correspondence between the Company and its agents in India, the directions of the English Ministry to the Governor-General, and all the countless documents, letters, tracts, and vouchers of every kind, calculated to throw light on the conduct of the Company's officers, civil and military, the relations of the several Presidencies to each other, the condition of the different classes of the population under their jurisdiction, and on their relations with the native princes, whether Mussulman or Hindoo, tributary or

independent. Well might Mr. Fox call this task Herculean ; and the toil, physical and mental, which, whether in Committee or in the House, for some years prior to, and during the protracted trial of Hastings, Burke had to go through in this Indian business, exceeds all belief.

The torrent of obloquy, too, he had to encounter in the discharge of these arduous functions, none but a man like himself, sustained by a high spirit of Christian fortitude, and glowing with a burning zeal in the cause of humanity, could have ventured to brave.

Two reports of this Select Committee are exclusively the productions of Burke—the ninth and the eleventh. The first, bearing date the 25th June, 1783, occupies 260 pages in his works, and throws great light on the political, judicial, commercial, and financial condition of British India. The eleventh report, drawn up in the same year, turns on charges against Hastings for the corrupt receipt of presents. It is to these two documents the remark of Lord Macaulay specially applies, namely, “that in despite of the great changes which, within the last sixty years, have occurred in our Asiatic dominions, those reports will still be found most interesting and instructive.*

In 1783, Mr. Fox, while Secretary for Foreign Affairs, introduced, in a speech of great power and eloquence, his famous India Bill. “This Bill,” justly observes Mr. Prior, “imparted to the Legislature, not to

* “Life of Hastings,” p. 67.

the Executive authority, a new power unknown to the Constitution, that of appointing Commissioners, who were to exercise the functions of Government over that vast continent. It annihilated, with little preface or apology, the chartered rights of the East India Company; took from it the management of its property by open force; offered no compromise; foisted no objections or prejudices; and attempted no conciliation. The principle itself, and the mode of carrying that principle into effect, were equally objectionable.”* Some writers, and among others Mr. Moore, in his “Life of Sheridan,” have contended that Burke was the real author of the obnoxious Bill. But for many reasons, both intrinsic and external, the biographer of Burke, as we have seen, rejects this supposition as untenable. First, no handwriting or document has been found among the papers, either of Burke or of Fox, fixing on the former the authorship of this famous Bill. Next, as Mr. Prior well shows, its main clauses were repugnant to that cautious, temperate legislation which ever distinguished the great Irish statesman. Then the praises lavished on that Bill by Burke were inconsistent with that tone of modesty, in which he invariably spoke of his own performances. Lastly, his assertion in open Parliament, and in the presence of Mr. Fox at the period of their rupture, that towards the close of the American war the mind of the latter statesman was utterly absorbed in the composition of

* “Life of Burke,” p. 230.

the India Bill, clearly fixes on him, and him only, the authorship of the famous measure.

Such is the substance of the arguments adduced by Mr. Prior to exonerate Burke from the responsibility of having devised the Bill. And in this opinion Earl Russell fully concurs. "Nor do the facts," says his Lordship, "at all bear the supposition that Mr. Fox was betrayed by the rashness of Mr. Burke into a scheme of which he did not approve. There do not appear any traces in the papers of Mr. Fox of any outline drawn up by Mr. Burke, upon which the India Bill was framed ; nor has any such plan been produced from the manuscripts of Mr. Burke."*

It is fair to add, however, that in this matter Mr. Macknight holds a contrary opinion to that expressed by Mr. Prior and Earl Russell. It is admitted by all that Burke was consulted in the composition of this Bill, and that possibly he may have made suggestions to its author. But that the scheme itself was the product of his mind, is an assumption contradicted by strong evidence, both intrinsic and external. It is one thing to devise a plan of reform one's self, and quite another thing to support a measure, however imperfect, when brought forward by a friend and a colleague, to remove gross and palpable abuses, requiring immediate correction. The subject, I admit, is involved in difficulty.

On the 1st December, 1783, Burke rose to speak on

* "Fox's Memorials." By Lord John Russell. Vol. ii., p. 98.

Mr. Fox's motion. The speech he then delivered I have already had occasion to advert to. Wraxhall, who was by no means friendly to Burke, and who on this occasion opposed the Bill, declares, "that if he were compelled to name the finest composition pronounced in the House of Commons during the whole time that he remained a member of that assembly, from 1780 to 1794, he should select this speech of Burke. Far from suffering by comparison with the orations of the greatest ancient masters, Greek or Roman, he believes it would gain on an impartial examination."* Such is the testimony of a political opponent.

To this it is well to add the testimony of a recent historian, by no means over favourable to Burke:—

"Burke," says Mr. Masséy, "who, as the reputed author of the Bill, was more immediately concerned in its vindication (this, as was shown, is a mistake), supported his great chief in one of those elaborate and masterly orations which transcend all the recorded eloquence of modern times, and emulate the noblest effusions of antiquity."—"*History of England under Geo. III.*," vol. iii. p. 69.

It is difficult which most to admire, the lucid arrangement of the complex materials, or the elegance of the narrative, or the ample knowledge of Indian affairs, or the vigour of the reasoning, or the fulness of the illustrations.

* "*Historical Memoirs*," vol. iii., p. 567.

In exposing the enormous abuses and the gross iniquities that stained the Indian Administration, the orator, for a high purpose, strives to curb his indignant feelings. Indeed, the oration strikes me like one of those noble specimens of Greek sculpture, where the artist seeks to repress the more violent emotions, and to impart to his figure the calm dignity of scorn. There are in the speech no passages of such splendid eloquence as we meet with in that on the payment of the Nabob of Arcot's debts, where, for example, Hyder Ali's invasion, and the ruthless desolation of the Carnatic, and the horrors of general famine are depicted with an energy so terrible.* In the latter speech, delivered two years after, and of which I shall presently have occasion to speak, it is the abuses in the financial administration that are more especially exposed and denounced. But in the speech on Fox's East India Bill, now under consideration, it is the iniquities in the political government of that country which the orator brings to light. Hence the latter, though not, perhaps, superior in merit, has, I confess, greater attractions for myself.

In this speech Burke shows that the Company's Government had pursued a most iniquitous policy towards the native Powers, embroiled them in wars one with another, broken treaties entered into with them, arbitrarily despoiled and deposed princes, and intro-

* This speech Mr. Moore and Lord Brougham seem to prefer to all others of our orator.

duced a frightful confusion into the states, whether allied or tributary. In the provinces immediately subject to their sway, the servants of the Company had by their enormous and arbitrary imposts ruined the Zemindars, or landed gentry of the country, impoverished the tenants, swept away the once wealthy merchants, deranged in some places and subverted in others, the civil and criminal judicature, and by perpetual changes in the laws and in the administration rendered the rights of all classes insecure.

The delinquencies of the Indian officials, and especially of Mr. Hastings, who might have discerned in this speech the foreshadowing of his own impeachment, are summed up in the following passage:—

“In effect, sir,” says the orator, “every legal, regular authority in matters of revenue, of political administration, of criminal law, of civil law, in many of the most essential parts of military discipline, is laid level with the ground; and an oppressive, irregular, capricious, unsteady, rapacious, and peculating despotism, with a direct disavowal of obedience to any authority at home, and without any fixed maxim, principle, or rule of proceeding to guide them in India, is at present the state of your Charter-government over great kingdoms.”*

The following passage, where the prosperity and happiness of India, as they existed in the times anterior to the breaking up of the Mogul Empire, are con-

* Works, Bohn's ed., vol. ii. p. 226.

trafited with the ruin and desolation brought on that country by the Company's officials, has always appeared to me very beautiful :—

“This country (the Carnatic),” says he, “in all its denominations, is about 46,000 square miles. It may be affirmed universally that not the substance or property, landed, commercial, or moneyed, excepting two or three bankers, who are necessary deposits and distributors of the general spoil, is left in all that region. In that country the moisture, the bounty of Heaven, is given but at a certain season. Before the era of our influence, the industry of man carefully husbanded that gift of God. The Gentoos preserved, with a provident and religious care, the precious deposit of the periodical rain in reservoirs, many of them works of royal grandeur ; and from these, as occasion demanded, they fructified the whole country. To maintain these reservoirs, and to keep up an annual advance to the cultivators for seed and cattle, formed a principal object of the piety and policy of the priests and rulers of the Gentoo religion.

“This object required a command of money ; and there was no pollam or castle, which, in the happy days of the Carnatic, was without some hoard of treasure, by which the Governors were enabled to combat with the irregularity of the seasons, and to resist or to buy off the invasion of an enemy. In all the cities were multitudes of merchants and bankers for all occasions of moneyed assistance ; and, on the

other hand, the native princes were in condition to obtain credit from them. The manufacturer was paid by the return of commodities, or by imported money, and not, as at present, in the taxes that had been originally exacted from his industry. In aid of casual distrefs, the country was full of choultries, which were inns and hospitals where the traveller and the poor were relieved. All ranks of people had their place in the public concern, and their share in the common stock, and common prosperity ; but *the chartered rights of men*, and the right which it was thought proper to set up in the Nabob of Arcot, introduced a new system. It was their policy to consider hoards of money as crimes ; to regard moderate rents as frauds on the Sovereign ; and to view, in the lesser princes, any claim of exemption from more than settled tribute as an act of rebellion. Accordingly, all the castles were, one after another, plundered and destroyed ; the native princes were expelled ; the hospitals fell to ruin ; the reservoirs of water went to decay ; the merchants, bankers, and manufacturers disappeared ; and sterility, indigence, and depopulation overspread the face of these once flourishing regions."*

This speech concludes with a noble tribute to the genius and character of Fox.

The India Bill was, as stated in the former Lecture, rejected (and chiefly through the personal exertions of

* Vol. ii. pp. 217-18, Bohn's ed.

the King), by a large majority in the House of Lords. We have seen how very abruptly the Monarch dismissed the Coalition Ministry, and what a bitter strife of parties then sprang up in the House of Commons. The youthful Minister, Mr. Pitt, placed in the most arduous position into which a statesman ever had been thrown, evinced, as I before said, wonderful tact, prudence, courage, and skill. He bided his time—dissolved Parliament at the fitting moment, and gained over his opponents in the general Election of 1784, that memorable victory of which I have already spoken.

Prior to the dissolution of Parliament, Mr. Pitt, on the 14th January, 1784, had redeemed his solemn pledge, and brought in a Bill for the better regulation of the Government of India. In the new Parliament, where his supporters mustered so strong, the Minister again introduced his measure, and this time with every prospect of success. Both his speeches, especially the first, are remarkable for lucidness of statement, force of reasoning, and dignity of eloquence.

The chief points in the Bill were as follows: the constitution of a Board of Control, consisting of a certain number of Commissioners, presided over by a Cabinet Minister, and exclusively charged with a superintending power over Indian affairs: all orders and despatches issuing from the Court of Directors, and addressed to the Governors of the several Presidencies, to be submitted to this Board, which was

empowered either to confirm, or to modify and alter, or to annul such orders; the Commander-in-Chief to be appointed directly by the Crown; and lastly, a special tribunal to be instituted for the trial of public delinquents. While the commercial affairs of the Company were reserved, as was right, to its exclusive management, the conduct of political affairs was brought under the supreme control of the British Crown.

Fox on the two occasions adverted to made very able speeches in reply to the Minister, extolling the merits of his own India Bill, and depreciating the production of his rival. Yet this double Government of India, as proposed by Pitt, which, while it left to the Court of Directors the immediate conduct of a vast empire, that their servants had founded, yet subjected it to the vigilant control of a Board composed of men of high rank and fortune, and headed by a responsible Minister of the Crown, lasted, with some slight modifications, for a period of seventy years. The Indian Administration became henceforth a mixed, well-balanced Government, with checks and counter-checks. For a dependency so remote, and withal so vast—where, too, such various and momentous interests were involved, any scheme of Government that could be devised was of necessity more or less defective. And I must say, that the India Bill first brought forward under such adverse circumstances by the youthful Minister, displayed wonderful sagacity.

And I feel bound to add, that the people of England, in offering such strenuous opposition to Mr. Fox's Bill, and to the coalition which supported it, evinced a true monarchical instinct.

Even at this distance of time, I am at a loss to conceive how Burke, with his constitutional views, could have lent his support to a measure that so unmistakeably bore the Roundhead stamp. I suppose he conceived that the desperate ills of India demanded a desperate cure; and that as the Parliamentary Commissioners to be appointed under his friend's Bill were to exercise their functions but for a period of four years, no permanent detriment would thereby be inflicted on the Royal prerogative. He forgot (to say nothing else) the danger of such a precedent. Earl Russell, as we have seen, observes that there is nothing in the papers left by the two statesmen to prove that the rashness of Mr. Burke betrayed Mr. Fox into a measure which he disapproved of. This is true, so far as it goes. But I will take the liberty of adding, that there are many reasons to surmise that, on this memorable occasion, the rashness of Mr. Fox did actually prevail over the wisdom of Mr. Burke.

Mr. Pitt's East India Bill was, in July 1784, carried in the Commons by the triumphant majority of two hundred and eleven voices; and, having passed in the Lords, received the Royal signature.

It is now time to pass to another phase in the Indian policy of Burke.

Before I proceed to speak of his famous Speech on the payment of the Nabob of Arcot's debts, it may be useful to premise a brief account of the circumstances that led to the Parliamentary motion that called it forth.

Among the princes in Southern India dependent on the British East India Company, the most considerable at the period under review was the Nabob of Arcot. It was by British influence, and by British arms, he succeeded, in opposition to the claims of an elder brother, in establishing himself on his throne.

Instigated, as he asserts, by servants of the East India Company, he began to entertain designs of conquest against neighbouring states, as well as to introduce certain pernicious changes in the internal government of his own dominions. For the better carrying out of his designs, he formed a secret league with certain servants of the Company, in the hope of obtaining, without its ostensible authority, the use of its resources and power.

Instead of residing in the splendid palaces of his own dominions, he sequestered himself from his country, and lived in an ordinary house in the suburbs of Madras. Here for many years he carried on a series of intrigues with the agents of the Company established in that city. An opinion prevailed (and it is corroborated by many passages in the Nabob's letters), that in a long course of years very large sums had been distributed to some of that Company's servants. Besides these

presumed payments in ready money (of which Burke justly says, the direct proof, from the nature of things, was very difficult), the Nabob has acknowledged as due to these gentlemen, several millions of English sterling money. There were strong grounds to suspect that these debts were purely fictitious ; but whether so or no, the current report was calculated to excite alarm, and to provoke inquiry.

It was most unseemly, that at the moment when the Court of Directors complained of their inability to meet their engagements, and had even obtained from Parliament an Act authorizing the suspension of the payment of bills drawn on them from India, their servants should appear so opulent as, besides ten millions sterling of other demands on their masters, to be entitled to claim a debt of three or four millions more from the territorial revenue of one of their dependent princes.

The facts connected with these debts were so notorious, and they were so generally regarded as the chief source of the disorders in the Indian administration, that all parties in Parliament called for a rigid inquiry into the matter. In all the bills introduced into Parliament relative to India, investigation into these alleged abuses was uniformly urged. By the Bill commonly called Mr. Pitt's Bill, such inquiry was specially committed to the Court of Directors ; and, in case of need, that Court was permitted to employ for the same object the agency of the Council of Madras.

The Court of Directors, accordingly, examined into this affair, and found the first alleged debt to the Nabob of Arcot to amount to 2,945,000*l.*, computed at compound interest. Another debt they compute at 2,465,680*l.* This debt was of an especially suspicious character, as, though the Directors had frequently written on the subject to the Nabob of Arcot, and to their own servants, they had never been able, they say, to trace its origin, or to obtain any satisfactory information on the matter. For these reasons, the Directors add, that even without the special injunction contained in the Act of Parliament, they would have felt themselves bound to institute a minute inquiry into the nature and origin of these debts. Under the authority of the Act, they accordingly proceeded to direct the President and Council of Madras to enter upon the investigation of this business.

The Directors communicated to the Ministerial Board of Control the draft of their instructions to the Council of Madras. But the Ministers addressed to the Directors a letter containing the very opposite injunctions. Yet, in despite of their solemn trust and oath, of their recorded sentiments, and their urgent remonstrances, and of the very Act of Parliament introduced by the Ministers themselves, the Directors were required to acknowledge, without further inquiry, the validity of these debts, and out of the revenues of the Carnatic, to set apart a fund for their due discharge.

In another case, the Ministerial Board of Control rescinded the decision given by the Court of Directors in the draft of instructions submitted by them to that Board, and in so doing, set at naught a positive injunction of the recent Act of Parliament. By that law, the Directors were entrusted with the right of adjudicating without appeal on the indeterminate rights of the Rajah of Tanjore and the Nabob of Arcot. By the intrigues of the latter, the territories of the former potentate had been twice invaded and pillaged, and the prince himself deposed.

The Directors had previously ordered, under certain conditions, a restitution of his territory to the Rajah. This sovereign still complained that that restitution had been incomplete. The Directors, in pursuance of the Act of Parliament, ordered an inquiry, and came to a determination to restore certain of his territories to this ill-treated prince. This decision, also, the Ministerial Board reversed. Without hearing any of the parties concerned, and without regard to the condition of the country of Tanjore, four times pillaged (twice by the Nabob, and twice by enemies instigated by him), the Ministers, disregarding the clauses in the Act of Parliament, forced the Directors to annul their own act, and fix on the Rajah of Tanjore a tribute to his enemy, the Nabob of Arcot, with an accumulated arrear of 400,000*l*.

Such proceedings, of course, called for investigation. On the 28th February, 1785, Mr. Fox, after moving

that the several clauses of the Act of Parliament above referred to should be read, made the following motion : —“ That the proper officer do lay before this House copies and extracts of all letters and orders of the Court of Directors of the United East India Company, in pursuance of the injunctions contained in the 37th and 38th clauses of the said Act.”

In an able speech, Mr. Fox opened the debate, which was closed by a long and splendid harangue from Burke.

In this speech, he leads us through the intricate labyrinth of Indian politics, unfolds all the artifices of speculation and avarice, points out the fraudulent collusion between the body of Directors at home, and their officials in India, for practising usurious extortions on the natives of that country ; exposes with the finest irony the inconsistent, wavering, equivocal policy of the Ministers, and enkindles our indignation at the appalling spectacle of Indian oppression and Indian suffering. Over a statement of dry financial details, he has contrived to throw the rich colours of his glowing imagination ; and while he excites our detestation against injustice and tyranny, and rouses our sympathy in behalf of the oppressed, he never permits, even in the monotonous narrative of fraud, our interest for a moment to flag.

I will cite two passages illustrative of the charges embodied in this speech, and of the reasoning and eloquence by which they are supported :—

“ Here, sir,” says Burke, “ you see how these causes

and effects act upon one another. One body of troops mutinies for want of pay ; a debt is contracted to pay them ; and they still remain unpaid. A territory destined to pay other troops is assigned for this debt ; and these other troops fall into the same state of indigence and mutiny with the first. Bond is paid by bond ; arrear is turned into new arrear ; usury engenders new usury ; mutiny, suspended in one quarter, starts up in another ; until all the revenues and all the establishments are entangled into one inextricable knot of confusion, from which they are only disengaged by being entirely destroyed. In that state of confusion, in a very few months after the date of the memorial I have just read to you, things were found, when the Nabob's troops, famished to feed English focars, or money-lenders, instead of defending the country, joined the invaders, and deserted in entire bodies to Hyder Ali." *

Again, in the following passage, the orator displays the fatal collusion between the Home Directors and their Indian servants in the practice of usurious exactions from the native princes ; exactions subversive of the authority of the former, and ruinous to the unhappy people of India.

"All this time," says he, "they (the Directors), know, that by having a debt (to themselves) subsisting without any interest, which is to be paid by contracting a debt on the highest interest, they manifestly

* Vol. iii. p. 145, Bohn's ed.

render it necessary to the Nabob of Arcot to give the private demand (of the English money-lenders), a preference over the public demand, or that of the East India Company ; and by binding him and their servants together in a common cause, they enable him to form a party to the utter ruin of their own authority and their own affairs. Thus, their false moderation, and their affected purity (he is speaking of the Home Directors), by the natural operation of everything false and everything affected, becomes pander and bawd to the unbridled debauchery and licentious lewdness of usury and extortion.

“In consequence of this double game, all the territorial revenues have, at one time or other, been covered by those locusts, the English focars, or money-lenders. Not one single foot of the Carnatic has escaped them ; a territory as large as England.

“During these operations, what a scene has that country presented ! The usurious European assignee supercedes the Nabob’s native farmer of the revenue ; the farmer flies to the Nabob’s presence to claim his bargain ; whilst his servants murmur for wages, and his soldiers mutiny for pay. The mortgage to the European assignee is then resumed, and the native farmer replaced ; replaced, again to be removed, on the new clamour of the European assignee.* Every man

* See Consultation, 28th January, 1781, where it is asserted, and not denied, that the Nabob’s farmers of revenue seldom continue for three months together. From this the state of the country may be easily judged of.

of rank and landed fortune being long since extinguished, the remaining miserable last cultivator, who grows to the soil, after having his back scored by the farmer, has it again flayed by the whip of the assignee ; and is thus by a ravenous, because a short-lived, succession of claimants, lashed from oppressor to oppressor, whilst a single drop of blood is left as the means of extorting a single grain of corn.

“ Do not think I paint. Far, very far from it. I do not reach the fact, nor approach to it. Men of respectable condition, men equal to your substantial English yeomen, are daily tied up and scourged, to answer the multiplied demands of various contending and contradictory titles, all issuing from one and the same source. Tyrannous exaction brings on servile concealment ; and that, again, calls forth tyrannous coercion. They move in a circle, mutually producing and produced ; till at length nothing of humanity is left in the government, no trace of integrity, spirit, or manliness in the people, who drag out a precarious and degraded existence under this system of outrage upon human nature. Such is the effect of the establishment of a debt to the Company, as it has hitherto been managed, and as it ever will remain, until ideas are adopted totally different from those which prevail at this time.”*

The celebrated passage in this speech, describing the desolation of the Carnatic by Hyder Ali, and which

* Vol. iii. pp. 175-6, Bohn's ed.

His First Speeches against Hastings

is one of the most splendid in our literature, well known to need more than a passing reference.

I am now approaching one of the most eventful periods in the life of Burke. We have seen how long the affairs of India had engaged his attention, and how frequently in the course of his speeches he had made allusion to the conduct of the Governor-General, Warren Hastings. He had on one occasion pointed out the singular phenomenon that an individual whose conduct had been reprobated by the House of Commons, and who had been recalled from his post by the Court of Directors, should still continue to lead the armies, and conduct the civil government of India.

At the very outset of these proceedings, it may be well to show the spirit which dictated and guided the policy of our illustrious statesman in the prosecution of the great Indian official. And this is the more necessary, as Lord Macaulay, who, in his judgment of Burke, is usually far more just and generous than the other members of his party, has in his "Life of Hastings" written as follows: "Burke's indignation towards Hastings, virtuous in its origin, acquired too much of the character of personal aversion. *He could see no mitigating circumstance, no redeeming merit.*"*

In a speech delivered in Parliament in 1784, when moving for the production of certain papers relating to the conduct of Hastings, Burke himself, by anticipation, refutes this charge. "*I disclaim,*" says he,

* "Life of Hastings," p. 32.



*“every feeling of personal pique or aversion. Mr. Hastings has never injured or offended me. He possesses many qualities, of which I am as ready as any man to avow my admiration. I entered on the ‘Select Committee’ with such a manifest partiality for this man, that the friends of Sir Elijah Impey often upbraided me for the prejudice which they thought I entertained in his favour. I had been, like many of my betters, dazzled with the constant panegyrics which attended the mention of his name. But the huge volumes of evidence which came under my inspection effected a complete revolution in all my ideas of this celebrated character. The inquiries which I thought it my duty to make were laborious, and I soon foresaw would certainly subject me to a world of obloquy and invidious remark. I persevered, however; and what was the result? I found that plunder, murder, and desolation had been systematically pursued; that the policy of India aimed only at rapacity; that no means, however foul and atrocious, which could facilitate this end, were omitted; and that the perpetrators of all these enormities, instead of being called to an account for their actions, were supported, protected, and cherished by those whose duty it was to prosecute and to punish them. I could not, therefore, but look on Mr. Hastings as the scourge of India.”**

Such is a plain, candid statement of Burke’s feelings in regard to this celebrated Indian Governor. But I

* *“Parliamentary History,”* vol. xxiv. p. 1,270.

do not pretend that, with an indignation so just and virtuous, no alloy of human infirmity was intermixed. On the contrary, I think that in his speeches on the Impeachment, the orator might have spared, in reference to the culprit at the bar, some expressions that were needlessly harsh. But as to a balancing of the merits and demerits of Warren Hastings, Lord Macaulay would have done well to remember that the speech of a public prosecutor must needs differ in its tone from the calmer essay of a political writer.*

Burke expressly said in Parliament, "that a set-off could only be urged where general criminality was imputed or suspected, against which it might be fair to plead general merits; but where a specific charge of criminality had been exhibited, it became an act of duty to put the party accused upon his trial, without regard to any merits which he might possess in any part of his conduct."† And Fox, in his very

* Burke said of himself in Parliament, in 1786, that "no man was more ready to forgive a political adversary than he was, and to shake hands when the cause of contest was at an end."—*"Parliamentary History,"* vol. xxv., p. 1,403.

In the same debate, Mr. Wilberforce, who, as the friend and partisan of Pitt, sat on the opposite side of the House, paid the following generous tribute to the leading prosecutor of Hastings. After speaking of his long study of Indian affairs, and how much the wrongs of that country had kindled his indignation, he says: "Of that right hon. gentleman's head and heart, of his humanity and his abilities, his rectitude and his perseverance, no man entertained a higher opinion than he did."—*Ibid.*, p. 1,408.

† *"Parliamentary History,"* vol. xxvi., p. 887.

able speech on the Rohilla charge in 1786, observed that, whatever may be the services of Mr. Hastings, they cannot be pleaded here; they never can be considered as preventing his offences being inquired into; and if he is guilty, he ought to suffer the punishment due to them.* Sheridan, too, in his famous speech on the Begums in the following year, declares "that the House had shown its marked detestation of that novel and base sophism in the principles of judicial inquiry (constantly the language of the Governor-General's servile dependents!) that crimes might be compounded, that the guilt of Mr. Hastings was to be balanced by his successes, that fortunate events were a full and complete set-off against a system of oppression, corruption, breach of faith, peculation, and treachery."†

And in one of the concluding debates on the accusations against Mr. Hastings, Pitt uttered, in 1787, with respect to this principle of a set-off of merits against delinquencies charged—a plea which Hastings himself had repudiated—the following remarkable words: "For my own part, such is my opinion of many parts of the charges brought against Mr. Hastings, of their importance and criminality, that I cannot conceive, if they are well founded, how the highest and the greatest merits which have ever been alleged in favour of this gentleman can be set in opposition to them as a plea,

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxvi. p. 86.

† *Ibid.*, vol. xxvi. p. 277.

even against conviction and punishment, much less against inquiry and trial, which are now the objects in question.”*

These passages from the speeches of eminent public men I have cited, because they combat a principle of lax morality, that disfigures the brilliant biographical sketch by Lord Macaulay, who, though himself a man of upright and honourable sentiments, was not, I think, wholly uninfected by the spirit of his age ; a spirit which worships accomplished facts, and looks on deeds of the most atrocious usurpation, injustice, and violence, as quite justified by success.

After having ruled over India for thirteen years, Mr. Warren Hastings took his departure from Calcutta in November, 1784, and arrived in England on the 16th June of the following year. On the 20th of the same month Burke gave notice in the House of Commons, that he would in the following Session move for an inquiry into the administration of the late Governor-General of India.

Early in the following Session, in January, 1786, Major Scott, the indiscreet friend and advocate of Hastings, challenged Mr. Burke to bring forward his threatened motion. The challenge was taken up by the whole Opposition ; and Mr. Fox declared, that in case his right honourable friend shrunk from the enterprise, he would himself introduce a motion for instituting an inquiry into the public conduct of the

* “Parliamentary History, vol. xxvi. p. 1,136.

late Governor-General. So unjust is the accusation that Burke was the sole author of this famous Impeachment!*

In February and March of the same year (1786), Burke applied for papers, and announced his intention of moving for a prosecution of the late Governor-General by an impeachment at the bar of the House of Lords. Ministers refused some of the documents; and, as Lord Macaulay justly observes, "held language such as strongly confirmed the prevailing opinion that they intended to support Hastings."†

In April of the same year, many of the charges against Hastings, drawn up by Burke, were laid on the table of the House of Commons. There was a General Committee of the House, and to that Committee were referred for consideration all the reports on Indian affairs made in the course of several preceding years by the Secret Committee and the Select Committee.

The charges against the late Governor-General which had been framed by Burke, evinced a rare knowledge of the minutest transactions in India, a spirit of searching analysis, and an admirable clearness of style. Pitt complained that though they contained much criminatory matter, which involved the honour, dignity, and the most sacred interests of the Empire, as well as the character of the accused party, yet were

* Mr. (afterwards Sir Philip) Francis declared that he first suggested to Burke such a proceeding.

† "Life of Hastings," p. 83.

they often vague and indefinite, and were, besides, mixed up with extraneous historical narratives. Burke replied that political misdemeanours were not, like offences against private persons or private rights, capable of exact definition, but might be aggravated or extenuated by a variety of concomitant circumstances ; and that, therefore, all charges directed against them must needs be more or less indefinite, and contain much explanatory matter. Secondly, he remarked that his original plan, which had been overruled by the House, was to call in evidence for the prosecution, and then out of that evidence to draw up and shape his accusations. Fox observed, too, that these charges, brought forward by his distinguished friend, were not yet *articulated* ; that they were but the crude materials of accusation, out of which the specific articles of impeachment were to be formed.

A copy of the charges was delivered to Mr. Hastings ; and a short time afterwards he was permitted to defend himself at the bar of the House of Commons. His defence was able, but too lengthy ; and his recent biographer, Lord Macaulay, justly observes, that the reading of a lengthened document to a popular assembly, accustomed as that assembly was to the most fervid oratory, was a great mistake.*

On the 1st June, 1786, Burke brought forward against Hastings the first charge, that relating to the extermination of the Rohillas. This whole affair was

* "Life of Hastings," p. 84.

one of the most atrocious abuses of power in the entire administration of the late Governor-General, and had been already severely reprobated by the House of Commons. The Rohillas were tribes of Afghans, settled for several centuries in Northern India, and were remarkable for their valour, intelligence, and agricultural skill. The country they occupied being noted for its flourishing husbandry and commerce, tempted the cupidity of Sujah Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude. This profligate and wicked prince, without any provocation whatsoever, declared war against the noble inhabitants of Rohilcund. He well knew that his own troops were unequal to the subjugation of this valiant race ; and so he solicited the co-operation of the British East India Company. The Governor-General, Warren Hastings, with a baseness exceeding that of the Nabob of Oude, hired out, for the sum of four hundred thousand pounds, to this his worthy ally, and for the purpose of aiding him in his flagitious enterprise, a brigade of English troops. Thus, a noble, unoffending people, in despite of its most solemn protests, and its most liberal offers, beheld the wicked invasion of its dominions ; and when, after an heroic resistance, it had succumbed to superior discipline, it saw its lands, cities, villages, and homesteads given up to the rage, rapacity, and lust of the spoiler, followed by famine and pestilence in his train. Not one stipulation, in case of the Nabob's success, had Hastings made in behalf of the rights of the vanquished—not one word

of rebuke or protest did he utter, though urged by the Commander-in-Chief to do so, against the utter extermination of an innocent race.

This most base, treacherous, cruel policy, which brought dishonour on the British name, naturally called forth the eloquent invective of Burke. The Minister Dundas, on the other hand, though he had presided over the "Secret Committee," which had, in 1782, reprobated the public conduct of Hastings, and had demanded his recall—a condemnation confirmed by the House of Commons—yet now rose to shield the late Governor-General from prosecution. He talked of his later services as redeeming his former misdemeanours, pointed to acts of immorality that had often disfigured the policy of Governments, and even of our own in recent times, and seemed to insinuate that expediency, and not eternal justice, was the standard whereby political measures were to be judged. A more pitiable display of inconsistency, and of low, selfish politics, was never witnessed in Parliament. In despite of the efforts of Burke and Fox, the motion was negatived by 119 votes against 67. Pitt, who in the debate had observed deep silence, voted with the majority.

The friends of Hastings were elated by this victory. The Opposition in Parliament were thrown into a state of equal discouragement. When on one of the most important charges, and one, too, formerly confirmed by the combined authority of the Court of Directors and of the House of Commons, the Governor-General

had been now acquitted by the new House of Commons, there seemed, indeed, little chance that his impeachment could be eventually carried.

On the 13th June, of the same year, a second charge against Hastings was brought forward by Mr. Fox. This was what was called the Benares charge, and related to the exorbitant exactions in money wrung by the late Governor-General from Cheyte Sing, the Rajah of Benares ; the scandalous deposition of that prince, and the political revolution in his dominions which had been the consequence. Fox opened the charge with his usual talent and eloquence, and showed to what an abject state of uncertainty, misery, and bondage the cruel cupidity of the Governor-General had gradually reduced the Sovereign and the people of that country.

Besides a fixed tribute, which the Rajah had regularly paid to the Company, Hastings, contrary to express stipulations, had for three successive years exacted from this unfortunate prince an aggregate sum of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. Then when, by further extortions, the Governor-General had exhausted the patience of his victim, and forced him to make remonstrances, he construed those remonstrances into so many crimes, and punished his contumacy by demanding a supply of one thousand horse. Utterly unable to meet this demand, but in hopes of allaying the rapacity of Hastings, the Rajah offers him the sum of two hundred thousand pounds.

But not content with this proposal, the pitiless tyrant exacts half a million more, and even conceives the project of selling the whole territory of Benares, as he had formerly done Rohilcund, to the worthless Nabob of Oude.

The Governor-General then visits Benares ; and though the Rajah comes out in solemn state to meet him, and treats him even with obsequious deference, yet are his advances met with fullen disdain.

At length, in his very capital—the seat, too, of the Brahminical religion and learning—Hastings has the audacity to arrest the person of the Rajah, and place him under the custody of sepoy. Throughout the whole kingdom this atrocious insult provokes a mutiny, and several English officers and many sepoy fall in a conflict with the insurgents. Amid the general confusion the Rajah escapes from his palace. He gives a defiant answer to Hastings, but the rapid advance of the British troops from Bengal puts an end to this national rising.

The unhappy Rajah quits his territory for ever, and Benares is henceforth annexed to the dominions of the Company.

An addition of two hundred thousand pounds was thus made to its revenues. The treasure of Cheyte Sing, deposited in his palace, had been estimated at a million sterling ; but not a fourth of that sum was it found to be ; and even this was claimed and taken as prize-money by the British troops.

After Fox had concluded his elaborate speech, Pitt rose, and justified Hastings on most of the points in his dealings with the Rajah of Benares, on which his conduct had been arraigned. But towards the close of his speech he severely condemned him for imposing on the Rajah an exorbitant fine, and declared, to the great surprise of his party, that he would give his support to Fox's motion. His conclusion did not certainly tally with his premises; but, inconsistent as his speech was, it turned the majority of the House against the late Governor-General. The charge brought forward by Fox was affirmed by 119 votes against 79. From this time forward the star of Hastings declined.

In the following session, on the 7th February, 1787, the third charge, relating to the resumption of the jaghires, or lands belonging to the Begums, or Princesses, of Oude, was brought on by Mr. Sheridan. The case was simply this. Disappointed in not finding in the royal coffers of Benares the amount of treasure he had been led to expect, Hastings made more sweeping and exorbitant demands than ever on the Nabob of Oude, Asaph-ul-Dowlah. This profligate prince, odious to his subjects, and contemned by his neighbours, had courted, in self-defence, the protection of the Company, and solicited of Hastings the support of a British brigade, which he engaged to pay. The gradual impoverishment of his people, however,—the result of his bad government—and the con-

sequent decline of the revenue, rendered him every year less capable of fulfilling his engagements with the Governor-General. The latter, then, hit on the expedient of plundering, in concert with the Nabob, the lands and treasures of his mother and grandmother, the Begums, or Princeesses, of Oude. These ladies had been left by the late Nabob with ample possessions in land, and a very large treasure in money and jewels. This was a lure too tempting for the cupidity of Hastings.

In the fortrefs of Chunar he, accordingly, held a conference with the Nabob of Oude, in which he engaged with the latter, that in case he should lend his assistance in confiscating the dominions and seizing on the treasures of the Begums, he should then be released from all his pecuniary obligations to the Company. This proposal on the part of the Governor-General was the more iniquitous, as Afaph-ul-Dowlah had already received considerable sums from the Princeesses, and as his repeated exactions had at last forced them to seek the mediation of the Government of Bengal. The Nabob of Oude, on receiving on one occasion a certain pecuniary aid from his mother, solemnly pledged himself never more to encroach upon her rights ; and the Government of Calcutta was a party to the compact, which it guaranteed. In the treaty of Chunar, therefore, a triple crime was committed by the Governor-General. First, he violated the plighted faith of his own Government ; next, he

trampled under foot the most sacred rights of property, of regal station, and of the tender and helpless sex ; and lastly, he strove to obliterate from the breast of a son the holiest feelings and instincts of filial piety.

Asaph-ul-Dowlah soon repented of the guilty compact he had entered into with Hastings ; but, forced to yield to his menaces, as well as to those of the English resident at Lucknow, he solemnly protested that in this act of injustice he was not a free agent.

The Begums were despoiled of their jaghires, or landed possessions ; and steps were taken to rob them of their treasures in money also. The eunuchs who presided over their household were seized, imprisoned, manacled, delivered over to tormentors sent by the Nabob, and almost reduced to starvation.

The Princesses, also, were treated with a barbarity little short of the outrages which their officers were subjected to. They were kept in close confinement ; the food admitted into the apartments of themselves and their attendants, scarcely sufficed to satisfy the cravings of nature ; the sanctity of their zenanas was violated by the officious intrusion of the agents of tyranny ; and, shameful to say, their effects were sold in the public market-place. At length, when the Governor-General had wrung from these helpless victims of spoliation the enormous sum of one million two hundred thousand pounds, and deemed nought more remained to glut his avarice, he released the eunuchs

from their fetters, and ceased to famish the Princesses and their attendants.

It was this tale of shame and horror that formed the theme of the very brilliant and stirring harangue which, on the 7th of February, 1787, Richard Brinsley Sheridan delivered in the House of Commons.

This orator, whom I have already had occasion to name, had, like his fellow-countryman, Burke, been designed for the bar. This profession he abandoned for the pursuit of letters ; and the latter he again gave up for the more exciting occupations of political life. Sheridan who was noted for the readiness and brilliancy of his conversational wit, had already, by several admirable comedies, acquired great reputation. In the House of Commons he soon distinguished himself by his promptness in reply, his ingenuity, his wit, his pointed irony, and his eloquence ; and (when he had studied the subject), by his vigour of reasoning. But all these varied gifts, which, had they been duly cultivated, would have made him a powerful orator, were deprived of half their force, by the want of diligence and perseverance, by a reckless improvidence in private life, and by the absence of religious and moral principle.

Yet, with all these drawbacks, he was on some occasions a very effective orator ; and in the great affair which now engages our attention, he delivered a speech that lasted for upwards of five hours, and which Burke, Pitt, Fox, and Windham, declared to

have been the most eloquent ever uttered within the walls of Parliament. Such was the effect it produced, that when the orator resumed his seat, the Peers below the bar, the strangers in the galleries, as well as the Members of the House, joined in one spontaneous burst of applause. So great was the excitement among the Members, that the House was compelled to adjourn.

The subject itself, affording so much scope for pathetic appeal and eloquent invective, was well adapted to the purposes of oratory. Such a topic, treated in an eloquent speech, and set off by a fine delivery, was calculated to produce the most striking effect. But this speech is admitted to have combined, in an extraordinary degree, close reasoning, brilliant wit and irony, the most touching pathos, and the most scathing invective. Unfortunately, no full and correct report exists of it; but the reports which I have read have left on my mind the impression, that the encomiums pronounced by the great orators I have just named must be in no small degree exaggerated. I find here epigrammatic points, from which the high models of eloquence are wholly free. Windham himself, while he calls this Begum speech "the finest that had been delivered within the memory of man," admits "that it had some faults of taste, seldom wanting either in the literary or in the parliamentary performances of Sheridan."*

* See Macaulay's "Life of Hastings," p. 88.

Then, again, those luminous trains of thought that so often light up the speeches of Burke are, if it be fair to judge from the existing meagre report, wanting also in this celebrated oration.

By this extraordinary effort of his genius, Sheridan augmented the majority against Hastings ; while, out of doors, he rallied public opinion to the cause of the impeachment. Pitt, and a great number of his partisans, supported this Begum charge ; and it was finally affirmed by a majority of 175 votes against 69.

I have not time to speak in detail of the remaining charges brought against Hastings. On the 2nd of March, 1787, Mr. Thomas Pelham opened the fourth charge, the subject of which was the corrupt and oppressive conduct of Hastings towards the Nabob of Farruckabad. The fifth charge, relative to contracts and salaries, was on the 15th of March brought forward by Sir James Erskine. On the 22nd day of the same month, the sixth charge respecting Fyzoolah Khan, the Rajah of Rampore, was opened by Mr. Windham. On the 2nd of April, the seventh charge, touching the corrupt receiving of bribes and presents, was intrusted to the management of Mr. Sheridan. On the 19th day of the same month, the eighth and last charge, relative to the revenues of Bengal, was brought forward by Mr. Francis, formerly an official colleague of the late Governor-General of India.

All these charges were affirmed by the House of

Commons, and some of them by large majorities. It is worthy of remark, that as the charges were successively evolved, the language of Mr. Pitt became more and more adverse to the accused party. A Committee was chosen by the House to prepare articles of Impeachment against the late Governor-General of India. On the 25th day of April of the same year, Mr. Burke, as Chairman of the Committee, laid those articles on the table of the House. On the 9th of May, the House took them into consideration; and after a last effort made in his defence by the friends of Hastings, Mr. Pitt rose, and warmly supported the main charges embodied in the Impeachment. The House then divided on the question, when the report was carried by 175 voices to 89.

The next day, Burke, by order of the House, and attended by the majority of its members, repaired to the bar of the Lords, and there, in the name of the Commons of Great Britain, solemnly impeached Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanours. Mr. Hastings was summoned to the bar of the Upper House; and after the articles of Impeachment had been read at great length, he was made to give bail, himself in twenty thousand pounds sterling, and two sureties in ten thousand pounds each, that he should appear in the following Session at the bar of the Lords, and there abide the issue of the process. A few days afterwards Parliament was prorogued.

The 13th day of February, 1788, was the day ap-

pointed for the trial of Warren Hastings before the Peers of the realm, assembled in Westminster Hall. Within the walls of that venerable pile, almost coeval with the English Monarchy itself, a more memorable cause had never been pleaded. There were assembled all that Britain comprised of most august and sacred, and noble and chivalrous, and learned and intellectual among her sons. Besides the Heir-Ap-parent, and the Princes of the Blood-Royal, there were the Baronial Magnates of the land, the dignitaries of the National Church, the luminaries of the Law, the valiant leaders of the Military and Naval forces, the Deputies of the Commons, and the most distinguished representatives of British art and letters; while the splendour of the scene was enhanced by the charms of female grace, beauty, and fashion.

After the brilliant picture which Lord Macaulay has drawn of this celebrated trial, it were presumptuous in me to attempt a description of the same.

The solemn procession was headed by Burke, followed immediately by the other Managers of the Impeachment, Fox, Sheridan, Windham, Grey, and others, all in full Court-dress. They took their places on green benches, right opposite to the Lord Chancellor.

The prisoner, the late Governor-General of India, knelt at the bar of the Lords, and then was permitted to take his seat.

The first two days of the trial were devoted to pre-

liminary business ; and then, on the third day, Burke rose to make the opening speech on the general matter of the prosecution. Every eye was fixed on the great orator, and there was a breathless silence in the assembly. Never before had he addressed so august an audience ; never before had he risen to speak on so momentous an occasion, impeaching as he did of high crimes and misdemeanours an exalted functionary, who had lately ruled a vast and distant empire with the pomp and power of an Eastern despot ; and pleading, too, as he did, the cause of oppressed and outraged millions, differing from him in race and creed, and separated by the distance of fifteen thousand miles. And never before had the powers of the mighty orator risen so high, showing themselves fully equal to the grandeur of the occasion. At one moment he instructs us in the history, manners, customs, laws, and institutions of India ; at another, he moves our pity ; at another, he enkindles our indignation, and harrows our feelings by the picture of crimes, and cruelties, and abominations. This opening speech was continued in four successive sittings, each speech lasting about three hours. Then the orator wound up this series of harangues in a magnificent peroration, of which I have space only to cite the concluding words. Raising up his hands and voice, he exclaimed : "I impeach Warren Hastings, Esq., of high crimes and misdemeanours. I impeach him in the name of the Commons of Great Britain

in Parliament assembled, whose Parliamentary trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of all the Commons of Great Britain, whose national character he has dishonoured. I impeach him in the name of the people in India, whose laws, rights, and liberties he has subverted, whose properties he has destroyed, whose country he has laid waste and desolate. I impeach him in the name, and by virtue of those eternal laws of justice which he has violated. I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured and oppressed in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation, and condition of life.”*

The orator sat down, leaving his auditors in a very tempest of emotion—agitated as they were by the various feelings of wonder, pity, admiration, and horror. Never had wrong been branded with such a stigma—never had eloquence more nobly vindicated the cause of right.

The charge relative to Cheyte Sing, the Rajah of Benares, was then brought forward by Fox, with great power of reasoning and of eloquence. He was assisted by Mr. (afterwards Earl) Grey, who at this early period gave promise of those distinguished talents that were so long to adorn the Senate.

The management of the article of accusation relating to the Begums of Oude was entrusted to Sheridan, who again delighted his hearers with a brilliant

* Works, vol. vii. p. 231.

rhetorical display, but by no means equal to the one which a year before had captivated the House of Commons.*

The Parliamentary Session of 1788 was drawing to a close, and as, out of twenty charges, two only had been heard, even on the side of the prosecution, there seemed every probability that this important trial would be protracted to an intolerable length. The Managers of the Impeachment had proposed, that each article should be pleaded and decided before the following could be entertained by the Court. To this course the counsel for the prisoner objected, requiring that, before the defence began, all the evidence on the different charges should be brought forward by the prosecutors. The latter mode of procedure was sanctioned by the Lords. But while this course by no means better served the ends of justice, it considerably augmented the law expenses of Hastings, and protracted the period of his anxiety and suspense.

In the autumn of the year 1788, His Majesty George III. was afflicted with that distressing malady I have already had occasion to speak of; and, in consequence, the Parliamentary debates on the Regency question caused the great State trial to be postponed for a time. When the King had recovered from his

* This speech, too, has been badly reported. Certainly many of the passages extracted by Moore in his life of this orator are very florid and declamatory, and can sustain no comparison, not only with the orations of his great contemporaries, but with those of Canning and of Plunket, and of Brougham.

attack, the Session was already advanced; and, as the Judges were on circuit, the Lords had to await their return to London. Accordingly, in the year 1789, there were not more than seventeen days devoted by the Upper House to the hearing of this very important case. In that year, however, Burke brought forward the charge of bribery and corruption against Hastings. This charge was supported in three very powerful speeches, delivered successively, on the 25th April, the 5th May, and 8th May, 1789. In the same year, Burke, for having held up Hastings as guilty of the murder of the Hindoo Nuncomar, was censured by the House. The friends of the late Governor-General believed that Burke and his friends, disheartened by this rebuke, which he had received with a noble meekness, would in disgust give up the prosecution of a great public delinquent. But they little knew the indomitable spirit of one animated with a high sense of Christian justice, and with a hatred of oppression.

In the following year (1790), there was a dissolution of Parliament; and when the new House of Commons assembled, it was seriously discussed whether the Impeachment had not been abated by the recent dissolution. The contrary was decided by Parliament,

The Lords, the majority of whom were known to be favourable to Hastings, purposely put off the trial till late in the Session of 1791. At length, on the 23rd of May of that year, Mr. St. John brought forward, with great ability, the fourth charge, when,

after five sittings, the case for the prosecution, according to a previous arrangement, was brought to a close.

The counsel for the prisoner, Mr. Law, afterwards Chief-Justice Ellenborough, and Mr. Dallas and Mr. Plomer, both subsequently raised to the judicial bench, entered upon the defence of the prisoner. They pleaded the innocence of the culprit at the bar on the several charges adduced, and in speeches far more lengthy than those of the Managers. Mr. Law, relying on the favour of the majority in the House, treated Burke with marked disrespect, and even insolence; and such conduct, of course, provoked from the latter angry retorts. The trial continued to drag its slow length along, now little heeded by a public, at its outset so intensely excited, but who, from the protracted duration of the process, from the mere technical difficulties that the Court allowed to obstruct its course, and especially from the stirring and awful scenes passing in a neighbouring country, had long lost all interest in the famous Impeachment. At last, in the year 1794, the counsel for the prisoner brought their defence to a close.

Burke then wound up the proceedings by an elaborate reply, wherein he recapitulated and enforced all the charges alleged against the late Governor-General of India, and refuted the objections of his counsel. This reply was embodied in a succession of speeches continued for nine days, from the 30th of May, 1794,

to the 16th June of the same year. Their great oratorical excellence shall presently be noticed.

As Parliament was about to be prorogued, the House of Commons, in July, 1794, passed a vote of thanks to the Managers of the Impeachment for their zealous and perseverant efforts in the cause which they had been charged to defend. Mr. Pitt, on this occasion, fully exonerated Burke and the other Managers from the unjust allegations thrown out against them; and the Speaker of the House, in an excellent address, paid a just tribute to the industry and eloquence of the Managers, and, like Pitt, declared that this Impeachment would serve as a memorable warning to future Governors of India. Burke, much affected, returned thanks to the House, briefly vindicated his conduct, and disclaimed any intention of casting imputations on the Company's servants in general, and observed that expressions used by him had been much misrepresented. This was the last speech he ever delivered in the House of Commons; for a few days after he accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, and retired from Parliamentary life.

At length, in the spring of 1795, the House of Lords pronounced a sentence of acquittal in favour of Hastings. In the pronouncement of this sentence, twenty-nine Peers only took part. Six only found the late Governor-General guilty on the second and third charges relative to Cheyte Sing and to the Begums of Oude; while, on the other articles, the minority was

still smaller. Lord Chancellor Loughborough was among those who, on some of the charges, pronounced Hastings guilty.

The late Governor-General, summoned to the bar, knelt down, heard his sentence of acquittal, and, on condition of paying his fees, was discharged. But the enormous expenses he had incurred by the trial, as well as its protracted duration, were tantamount to a very heavy penalty for the misdemeanours for which he had been arraigned, and of which he was now acquitted.

What wonderful productions are the speeches which Burke delivered during that lengthened trial! In them we find all the qualities that constitute the highest degree of eloquence. How lucid is the statement of the most complicated events! How cogent the reasoning, where argument is piled upon argument, fact upon fact; where every objection is skilfully answered, and in every charge against the prisoner, no aggravating circumstance is omitted! How searching and minute is the investigation of all the laws, customs, records, documents, bearing on the cause the orator is defending! How vivid, how graphic is the picture he gives of the institutions, manners, customs, modes of life of a people so remote and so strange as the inhabitants of Hindostan! What luminous expositions of their history do we here meet with! What profound reflections on the moral constitution of man! What noble bursts of eloquent in-

dignation! The style is unusually severe. Ornament is sparingly employed, and is always made subsidiary to the argument.

The purity of the motives which animated Burke in this prosecution I have already shown. That he, however, employed at times too great harshness of language towards the accused, I have admitted. Such expressions, as "this wretch," "this great criminal," ought not to have been applied to the culprit; for the British law presupposes the accused innocent, till the sentence of guilt be pronounced. Such language used before an august tribunal, and in the face of one, who had for many years held so exalted a position, was very galling and humiliating. Such needless asperity of language, when the bare recital of facts was criminatory enough, was calculated, I think, to damage the cause in which the prosecutor was engaged. But the fervid sensibility of Burke, united to great genius and great virtue, had been beyond measure inflamed by the sufferings of India. We must remember, too, the many and various provocations he had to endure. During his protracted labours on Indian affairs, he had to encounter a close combination of powerful interests—apathy in the public—opposition at Court—an equivocal attitude on the part of Ministers;—sometimes even when he recited the wrongs of India—wrongs which he described as robbing him of his sleep—the derision of young members on the Treasury-benches;—and lastly, during the Impeachment,

the perpetual taunts and cavils of the counsel for the accused, and the violent attacks of a mercenary press.

"The plain truth is," judiciously observes Lord Macaulay, "that Hastings had committed great crimes, and that the thought of those crimes made the blood of Burke boil in his veins."* This great man, I may add, so gentle and affectionate in private life, sometimes carried, in political affairs, his sense of justice to a degree of harsh, inflexible sternness.

As to the long duration of the trial, Burke, and the other Managers of the Impeachment, whom the advocates of Hastings charged with causing needless delay, are clearly to be exonerated from all blame. Mr. Pitt repeatedly declared that in this matter no fault attached to the Managers. And his friend, Mr. Dundas, boldly asserted in the House of Commons, that if there were any delay in the trial, it lay (he

* "Life of Hastings," p. 80. After noticing the fact that the silly charge of Burke's being animated by a spirit of personal revenge towards Hastings has been given up even by the advocates of the Indian Governor-General, Lord Macaulay rebuts the accusation of Mr. Gleig, that "Burke's hostility to Hastings sprang from the remembrance of the defeat of the Coalition, which he attributed to the exertions of the East India interest, of which Hastings was the head and the representative." The hostility of Burke to Hastings commenced long before the Coalition, and lasted long after Burke had become a strenuous supporter of those by whom the coalition had been defeated. . . . We surely cannot attribute to the events of 1784 an enmity which began in 1781, and which retained undiminished force long after persons far more deeply implicated than Hastings in the events of 1784 had been cordially forgiven."—"Life of Hastings," p. 80.

cared not who heard him, or where the declaration might be repeated,) at the door of the House of Lords."

This assertion is perfectly correct. It was the House of Lords that, by its perpetual adjournments, its servile adherence to empty forms, transferring, when any law-point was to be discussed, its sittings from Westminster Hall to its own House; the license it gave in a great State-Prosecution to the technical cavils customary in the inferior courts; and, above all, the very little time it devoted in each Session to the hearing of so important a cause, involving, as it did, the happiness of so many millions, and the honour and dignity of the empire—it was the House of Lords, I say, that must be charged with a delay most vexatious to the prosecutors, and most cruel to the accused.*

* "A part of this delay," said Burke himself in the House of Commons, on 11th May, 1790, "was to be imputed to the nature of the subject, the distance at which the transactions had been carried on, the difficulty of establishing them by regular evidence, and the circumstance of the Impeachment's comprehending the public administration of an Imperial province during a series of years." . . .

Burke did not hesitate to assert that the greater part of the delay was to be ascribed to Mr. Hastings himself; that he had obtained a negative upon the plan of the Managers for trying each charge separately—a plan which would have greatly expedited the whole business, and that his counsel had insisted upon every paper, any extract from which was adduced by the prosecution, being read entire to the Court.

Fox said, too, the reason the questions of evidence had been so numerous, was that the Managers had not been made acquainted with the principles upon which any evidence was pronounced incompetent."—*Vide* "Ann. Reg." for 1790, pp. 102-3.

"A well-constituted tribunal," says Lord Macaulay, "sitting regularly six days in the week, and nine hours in the day, would have brought the trial of Hastings to a close in less than three months. The Lords had not finished their work in seven years." ("Life of Warren Hastings," p. 97.)

Most candid and dispassionate men will, I think, concur in Mr. Prior's judgment on the results of this memorable trial.

After stating that it was to the *forms of law* the prisoner was indebted for an acquittal, he observes, "no reader but a lawyer will be satisfied with the course of the trial. Few conscientious men will be pleased with the result of it, or the means uniformly adopted to evade enquiry into the merits of the transactions themselves, which, in the eye of morality, will leave Mr. Hastings, if not a guilty man, at least a suspected one."*

The Marquis Wellesley, who had been Governor-General of India, and who knew the country well, said once in conversation, in reference to the prosecution of Hastings, "Had the question gone to judgment on the first three charges, he must have been convicted. There was no doubt of his culpability. Law's (Lord Ellenborough's) management saved him."†

Mr. Dundas, who had sat on one of the Parliamentary Committees on Indian affairs, thus spoke of

* "Life of Burke," p. 505.

† *Ibid.* p. 250.

the great Indian Governor: "Mr. Hastings," said he, "rarely quitted Calcutta that his track was not followed by the deposition of some prince, the desertion of some ally, or the depopulation of some country."*

Mr. Pitt, in 1787, declared in Parliament that he first thought that the language of the chief promoters of the Impeachment "had been too full of acerbity, too passionate and exaggerated; but when he found what the nature of the crimes was, and how strong the presumption that the allegations were true," he confessed he could not expect that the prosecutors should speak a language different from what the contemplation of acts of treachery, violence, and oppression naturally suggested.†

To pass to statesmen of a later generation, Earl Russell, in his "Memorials of Fox," declares, "that the

* Let us hear, too, the opinion of the eminent civilian, Dr. French Lawrence, who was one of the counsel for the Impeachment, and who was as remarkable for his integrity as for his learning. He declared to a friend that "after having made himself fully master of the subject, it was his deliberate opinion that there was not one charge against Hastings which, on the most mature information and reflection, he did not believe to be strictly true, and not a single point in the defence which was not either fallacious or false."—"Life of Burke," Macknight, vol. iii. p. 616. Such was also the sentiment of another gentleman of unquestioned integrity and honour, and who for his services in India was rewarded by the Company, the late Mr. Charles Grant. Mr. Prior informs us that to the day of his death he persisted in strongly condemning the administration of Hastings.

† "Parliamentary History," vol. xxvi. p. 1,138.

Governor-General (Warren Hastings) had set at defiance, with flagrant audacity, the laws of justice and good faith; unwarrantable aggressions, oppressive imposts, cruel punishments, had marked his conduct for successive years.”*

“Finally,” continues his Lordship (in a noble passage, worthy of lasting remembrance), “although the Impeachment ended in an acquittal, its results were memorable and beneficial. Never has the great object of punishment, the prevention of crime, been attained more completely than by this trial. . . . Mr. Hastings was acquitted; but tyranny, deceit, and injustice were condemned. India was saved from abominations disgraceful to the English name.”†

Lord Macaulay, though an idolator of mere intellect, and an especial admirer of the abilities and the energy of character which distinguished Warren Hastings, confesses that his government of India, however able and brilliant, was disfigured by *great crimes*.‡

The three most atrocious acts in the administration of Hastings, the extermination of the Rohilla tribes, the deposition of the Rajah of Benares, and the

*“Correspondence and Memorials of Charles James Fox.” By Lord John Russell, vol. ii., p. 96.

† *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 255-6.

‡ His words are, “On a general review of the long administration of Hastings, it is impossible to deny that against the great crimes by which it is blemished, we have to set off great public services.”—“Life of Warren Hastings,” p. 68.

spoliation of the Princesses of Oude, have been stigmatized with glowing indignation by Lord Macaulay.* There is, however, an endeavour, more or less transparent throughout his whole biography, to palliate the guilt of the Indian Governor, and to set off his political services against the crimes which the author is obliged to admit. Hence, in despite of frequent protestations, a lax tone of political morality pervades his work. "The motive," says his lordship, "which prompted the worst acts of Hastings was misdirected and ill-regulated public spirit. *The rules of justice, the sentiments of humanity, the plighted faith of treaties, were in his view as nothing*, when opposed to the immediate interest of the State. This is no justification, according to the principles either of morality, or of what we believe to be identical with morality—namely, far-sighted policy. Nevertheless, the common-sense of mankind, which in questions of this sort seldom goes far wrong, will always recognize a distinction between crimes which originate in an inordinate zeal for the Commonwealth, and crimes which originate in selfish cupidity. To the benefit of this distinction Hastings is fairly entitled. There is, we conceive, no reason to suspect that the Rohilla war, the revolution of Benares, or the spoliation of the

* He shows that it was in the provinces allied or tributary to the British Government, Hastings and his agents exercised their tyrannical influence. Bengal, under his immediate rule, was protected from the exactions and oppressions it had suffered during the dismemberment of the Mogul Empire.

Princesses of Oude, added a rupee to his fortune."* To this it may be said in reply, that some of the greatest political miscreants—such as not a few of the sanguinary Jacobins—were men personally disinterested, or careless about the acquisition of riches. Covetousness is not always associated with ambition; and the cold fanaticism of the understanding, like the ill-directed enthusiasm of the feelings, will not unfrequently disregard personal self. Such pecuniary disinterestedness, as far as it goes, renders political turpitude only the more dangerous, because the more seductive. But even in the acquisition of money, Lord Macaulay admits that the Governor-General was not over-nice, and that his wife was still less scrupulous.†

After all the extenuations which rhetorical skill can devise for the guilty rule of the Governor-General of India, this writer is reluctantly forced to pro-

* "Life of Hastings," pp. 73-4.

† From the comparatively moderate fortune which, after thirteen years' tenure of office—an office that at that time opened the door to so many illicit gains—Hastings brought over to England, Lord Macaulay concludes that he was not a rapacious man. But, in the first place, it is admitted that he lived with extraordinary splendour in India; and secondly, that besides the seventy thousand pounds acknowledged to have been expended by him in the course of his trial, vast but unknown sums of money were consumed by him in bribing the press, and in other incidental expenses. Hence, it is difficult to calculate the amount of money which, during the thirteen years of his administration, himself and Mrs. Hastings may have amassed in India. But as the matter is doubtful, he is fully entitled, I allow, to the benefit of the doubt.

nounce a verdict which is substantially the same with that delivered by Mr. Prior.

"The result of the trial," says he, "ceased to be matter of doubt from the time when the Lords resolved that they would be guided by the rules of evidence which are received in the inferior Courts of the realm. Those rules, it is well known, exclude much information which would be quite sufficient to determine the conduct of any reasonable man in the most important transactions of private life. *These rules at every assizes save scores of culprits, whom judges, jury, and spectators firmly believe to be guilty. But when those rules were rigidly applied to offences committed many years before, at the distance of many thousand of miles, conviction was, of course, out of the question.** We do not blame the accused and his counsel for availing themselves of every legal advantage in order to obtain an acquittal. *But it is clear that an acquittal so obtained cannot be pleaded in bar of the judgment of history.†*

To pass now from statesmen to historians, the late Mr. Mill, in his "History of India," corroborates in substance the sentence just cited. "If the accusers of Mr. Hastings," says he, "did not prove his guilt, he himself did not prove his innocence."‡

* Burke never expressed himself more strongly than Lord Macaulay in this passage on the mode of conducting the trial, as sanctioned by the Lords.

† "Life of Hastings," p. 97.

‡ "History of India," vol. v.

Sir John Malcolm, speaking on this matter with the cautious reserve of an Indian official, observes that the Parliamentary Committees on Indian affairs, over which Burke and Dundas had presided, disseminated among all classes a general knowledge of the affairs of the East India Company. "There can be no doubt," he continues, "that the promoters of these inquiries, however mixed their motives might have been, became entitled to the gratitude of their country; as unless such knowledge had been made general, every attempt to ameliorate and improve a Government, where the temptations to continue a corrupt system were so strong, would have proved vain and abortive."* He calls Burke "one of the wisest men and greatest orators that England has ever boasted."†

Speaking of this Impeachment, Burke's latest biographer, Mr. Macknight says, "the great accuser (Burke) was nominally defeated; but was it, in fact, a defeat? Hastings was publicly acquitted; and yet the cardinal object which Burke had at heart was, as I before said elsewhere, really attained. There was no doing away with the immense moral effect of that great prosecution. The whole Indian interest might constitute itself the champion of the late Governor-General; every servant of the Company might consider himself bound in honour to become the apologist of the accused; each Governor-General who succeeded him

* "Political History of India," vol. i. p. 36.

† *Ibid.* p. 36.

might mention his name and achievements with respect. But not one of his successors ventured to imitate the crimes for which Burke had arraigned Hastings before the House of Lords. It has never been necessary to impeach another Governor-General, because none of them had ever forgotten that the first and greatest had been actually impeached ; and one of the most illustrious of them, the Marquis of Wellesley, afterwards declared, "though Hastings was nominally acquitted, he was virtually convicted on every charge, and was only saved from an adverse verdict by the management of his lawyers."*

These judicious observations are confirmed by the authority of the "Quarterly Review."

"We may regret," says he, "the dilatory course of this trial, in itself a penal infliction that few crimes would justify ; but that is now properly ascribed to circumstances above the control of the accusers. From this reproach the statements of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas are amply sufficient to relieve the memory of Burke. . . . These labours (the labours undergone by Burke in the impeachment) were strictly constitutional in their tendency ; and their effect has been to cast the light of Parliamentary inquiry on a system which requires that corrective more than any part of the British Government ; to impress on the most powerful officers of the State the wholesome con-

* "Life of Burke," by Macknight, vol. iii. p. 747.

viction of the control of Parliament, and of their absolute responsibility to it.”*

Not only has the great Impeachment I have described been the means of deterring the subsequent Governors of India from a repetition of the misdemeanours therein denounced; but those misdemeanours themselves have been severely visited by the judgments of Heaven. The Hand that rules the universe makes itself ever and anon felt; and the Lord, who hath declared that He will visit the sins of the fathers on the third and fourth generation of those that hate Him, is ever there to avenge injustice. And the atrocious cruelties and shocking outrages which, in recent times, our innocent countrymen and countrywomen had to endure in a dreadful rising, were the penalty exacted by Divine Justice for the wrongs and oppressions perpetrated by English officials in India eighty or ninety years ago. Such a judgment the oracular genius of Burke once foretold in open Parliament would certainly overtake the descendants of those who either perpetrated such iniquity, or suffered it to go unpunished.—In conclusion, if I might venture to give an estimate of the general effects of British rule in India, the following would be the result of my inquiries:—

After the oppressions and violences that stained the first period of that rule, it has ensured to the inhabitants of the vast Peninsula a security for life and pro-

* “Quarterly Review,” vol. xxxiv. p. 469.

perty utterly unknown in the anarchic period of seventy years, immediately preceding the establishment of the British dominion in Bengal.* Nay, advantages have been bestowed on the country, such as even in the reigns of the best Mogul Emperors it never knew. The British Government has rescued the Hindoo from the religious intolerance often exercised by Mussulman rulers ; and it has prevented bloody collisions between the followers of the Mohammedan and Brahminical creeds. It has thrown open the Peninsula, the cherished abode of idolatrous superstition, to the labours of Christian and, among others, of Catholic missionaries. These enjoy perfect freedom in the exercise of their worship, in the building of churches, schools, and convents ; a freedom which they certainly would not have obtained under the Mohammedan, or even most of the Hindoo princes.

If the English, like other European colonists in Asia and in America, have often given scandal to the natives, and prejudiced them against Christianity, still the very intercourse brought about by British dominion between Mohammedans and Hindoos on

* When Bishop Heber was travelling in the upper provinces of India, Archdeacon Corrie, who was on his way to join him, heard two native farmers talking in a field by the road-side. It was just at a time when some copious rains had dispelled the fear of a drought and famine. "Neighbour," said one of them, "the rain is come at last. This rain will give us bread." "Yes," said the other, "*and we now have a Government that will let us eat our bread in peace and quietness.*"

the one hand, and Christians on the other, has served to soften unconsciously the religious prejudices of the former.

In other respects, too, the British sway has promoted the cause of civilization, and thus indirectly served the interests of religion. It has been the means of opening, not Hindostan only, but ultra-Gangetic India also, and even the remoter China and Japan, to the commerce of the world. It has enlarged our intellectual horizon by bringing to our knowledge the religious and political institutions, the laws, the customs, the literature, the arts and sciences of nations so widely separated from us by the distance of time and space. And thus have we gained a keener insight into the primitive world; and a new and powerful impulse has been given to the study of ethnology, comparative philology, archæology, mythology, and universal history—studies which, on one hand, have thrown great light on the Sacred Scriptures, and, on the other, on classical philology and antiquities.

Yet all these advantages are but preliminary and subsidiary to that great religious regeneration of Hindostan, reserved, as I before said, for the Catholic missionaries issuing from the British Empire. And when that great Christian renovation shall have been accomplished, or even be but progressing, then only will the moral significance of the mighty Asiatic empire, founded a hundred years ago by the British arms, be fully apprehended by the world.

SIXTH LECTURE.



IN January, 1792, as I mentioned in a former Lecture, Richard Burke arrived in this city,* and entered on his new functions, as Secretary to the Catholic Board. Prior to his arrival in Ireland, he had held, at the request of the Irish Catholics, several interviews with the Ministers, urging on them the justice of the Catholic claims, and the policy of allaying discontent in Ireland, and attaching the bulk of her population to the Crown and the Constitution. His representations seemed to have had due weight, and to have obtained the acquiescence of Ministers. On his arrival in Dublin, he sought to remove political divisions in the Catholic party, to inspire them with courage and energy in the prosecution of their just claims, and withal, to discountenance any violent proceedings or revolutionary views that might compromise their noble cause. At the same time, he made every exertion to conciliate the High Church party, and the leading functionaries

* Dublin.

of the Irish Government, and to bring them over to the cause of Catholic Emancipation ; while he strove to inflame the zeal, and redouble the exertions of its supporters in the Irish Parliament. Difficulties beset him on every side ; and from the most adverse parties, he had to encounter opposition. Yet by his uprightness, energy, prudence, and tact, he succeeded in obtaining the full confidence of the Irish Catholics. He fanned the flame of Grattan's patriotism ; denounced the timid, truckling policy of Lord Kenmare, and of a certain number of other Catholic noblemen and gentlemen, who had seceded from the Committee, and had addressed the Crown, petitioning for a wretched minimum of Catholic rights ; addressed the wisest counsels to that Committee, and unmasked the duplicity of the officials of the Castle.

Writing to his father soon after his arrival in Ireland, he thus describes the anomalous condition of its political parties. "In this country," says he, "everything is singular, and out of its place. Those who err most grossly and violently on the side of speculation, are right in point of practice ; and those who would be thought to fight the battles of the Constitution in theory, are enemies to the application of its most acknowledged principles. Those who differ in practice are the first to be contended with."*

The anomalies in the principles and the conduct of parties here pointed out were but in keeping with

* "Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 41.

the political anomalies of a country, where the religious and civil wars and revolutions of the preceding three hundred years had thrown confusion into all the relations of public and private life. And what else but anomalies could exist in a land, whose entire area had been in that period of time (to use the words of Lord Clare) three times over confiscated ; and where Lord Redefdale, an English judge, by no means favourable to Catholics, who in the last century and in the early years of the present, had presided in the Irish courts of equity, once declared that in Ireland “there were at that time two laws—one for the rich, and one for the poor?” What else but anomalies could exist in a land, where all the relations of political life were inverted ; where, unlike what had occurred in other countries, the spirit of conquest was perpetuated in times of peace, and the wounds of civil warfare were never allowed to close ; where the Church, which enlightened, directed, sustained, and consoled the suffering millions of a faithful people, was for so many ages oppressed, degraded, despoiled, proscribed ; where the fountains of education, opened by the piety of Catholic ages, were either dried up, or turned away from their destined purpose ; where the aristocracy, that had risen up on the ruins of the native gentry, too often either by its absence or by its harsh exactions, alienated the affections of its tenantry ; where those municipal corporations, that elsewhere guard the freedom, and promote the material well-

being of the citizen, here threw up a wall of separation between the inhabitants of the same city; where a Parliament not more bigoted than corrupt, spurned for long years the just petitions of a down-trodden people; what else, I say, but *anomalies* could exist in such a land? And not the least of these anomalies, perhaps, was that the party which functioned and abetted such monstrous abuses and oppressions—the party of ascendancy—called itself *a constitutional party*—*a conservative party*!!! But this faction I will take leave to call a *revolutionary* faction—one revolutionary in its origin—revolutionary in the means by which it perpetuated its power—revolutionary in its endeavours, at the risk of destroying all religion, to isolate the Catholic people of this country from its priesthood—revolutionary in its sympathies, never more active than at the present hour, with the religious and political Anti-Christ abroad—lastly, revolutionary by its connexions with the Masonic order.

And on the other hand, was it wonderful that in such an anomalous state of things, and in the prevalent confusion of political ideas, the defenders of right and freedom should have been sometimes misled, and based on wrong principles the great cause of Catholic Emancipation? When Richard Burke visited Ireland, the air was charged with thunder, and the lightnings were flashing over Europe. What marvel, then, if in a forest, where a false and wicked legislation had stunted the growth of the trees, and dried

up their sap, and rendered the leaves parched and arid, some of those trees should in the thunder-storm have ignited ?

After he had been some months in Dublin, Richard Burke addressed to Lord Grenville, then Secretary for the Home Department, a letter, wherein we find the following noble tribute to the worth and excellence of the Irish Catholics. The letter is dated June 2nd, 1792 :—

“I can take upon myself, my lord,” says he, in the most solemn and conscientious manner, “to say, from my own knowledge, that no prince either has, or can have, subjects more deserving of encouragement, or less likely to abuse it, than are the Roman Catholics of Ireland. The character of their religion disposes them in a peculiar manner to gradations both in Church and State. They have been accused of carrying their loyalty and attachment to hereditary succession even to excess, which has been the pretext for most of their sufferings ; and their natural disposition is confirmed into habitual loyalty, by the necessity of looking constantly to the throne for protection against the oppressions of their fellow-subjects. I may add, that they are really conscientious men, who practise their religion in sincerity, according to the best of their judgment, and do not make it a pretext for political combinations formed for political purposes. Those who have the principal influence amongst them, and with whom I am intimately acquainted, are men

of sound understandings ; and I do not believe there exists a set of men of more integrity, and simplicity of mind and manners. I do not believe there exists a body of men whom it would be more expedient in any Government at this time, to take up, to cherish, and to cultivate, as a bulwark and security against the prevailing errors and vices of the time, and as a safeguard to the Throne and the Constitution, than the Catholics of Ireland. I do sometimes persuade myself that the deliverance of this people was, as it were, providentially reserved for this season ; that in so critical a moment, so many millions of men might be bound to the Throne, by the sense of a recent and immense obligation ; and that the British Constitution might be planted in their breasts as in a virgin soil, while the blessings of it are in a manner exhausted in the minds of others, and men have become satiated with its long enjoyment.”*

Equally strong is the testimony borne by the illustrious father to the high intellectual merits of the Catholics of this country.

“There are persons,” says he, “amongst the Catholics of Ireland of deep thought, keen sagacity, and sound understanding ; and those not a few. There are successions of them. If one is bought off, twenty will come on. You have read the discourses at the last Dublin meeting. I don’t subscribe to every word

* “Correspondence.” Edited by Earl Fitzwilliam. Vol. iii. pp. 465-6.

in them, no more than to what I hear in Parliamentary debates, where I approve the main matter ; but this I say, that in no Parliamentary discussion have I ever heard a topic better handled. I doubt whether, on that subject, a man's faculties can go beyond it.”*

The admirable conduct of the bulk of Irish Catholics in the trying situation in which they were placed is thus described by Richard Burke :—

“While men in other countries,” says he, writing in 1792, “from mere satiety and restlessness of disposition, are set upon desperate experiments, and go in quest of untried benefits, it is somewhat remarkable that the Catholics, that is to say, the people of Ireland, provoked by every species of injustice and insult, should be led away by no extravagant desire of change. It indicates a most happy temper in themselves, and let me say, some good fortune, some good intention in those who have conducted them.”†

In a letter to his relative, William Burke, dated August 17, 1792, Richard gives an account of the state of parties in Ireland, and of the part which he played as Secretary to the Catholic Committee. The Irish Government, then presided over by the Earl of Westmoreland, and having for its Chief Secretary Mr. Hobart, was quite adverse to the Catholic claims, and was pursuing a very crooked policy.

* “Correspondence,” vol. ii. p. 145. Works ed. 1852. London.

† “Correspondence,” vol. iv. pp. 109-10.

Having stated that, in his interviews with the English Ministers, he urged on them the policy, as well as the justice, of emancipating the Irish Catholics, in order to give them an interest in the Constitution, and in order to make them serve as a counterbalance to the Dissenters, supposed not to be a little infected with the new theoretical doctrines (meaning those of the French Revolution), Richard Burke proceeds as follows:—"I found," he says, "the English Ministers disposed to enter into my ideas from the very first, and I succeeded in keeping them so, notwithstanding the reluctance and strenuous opposition of the Irish Government. Hobart, who was my school-fellow at Westminster, and is now Secretary in Ireland, was sent over to counteract my negotiation; but he returned with instructions to comply with the requisitions I had made on behalf of the Catholics. These were, a power to practise the law, to serve in provincial magistracies, on grand and petty juries, and to vote at county elections, though on a somewhat larger qualification." The writer then proceeds to describe the crafty arts which the Irish Executive resorted to, in order to hamper the negotiations in which young Burke was engaged, and to fritter away the proposed concessions. He then proceeds to say: "That I may explain to you the scheme the Irish Government pursued (which was not wholly without art), I must take the business a little higher up. The affairs of the Catholics have been for some time conducted by a sort of Committee,

constructed somewhat on the principle of a representation. Lord Kenmare, an old friend of my father's, had for a long time had their principal confidence ; but they found out, at last, that he had made himself a creature of the Castle, which had no other view than to put them off with fair words, and never to render them any real service. The natural consequence was, that he lost his credit by degrees, and the Committee got into the hands of more sincere and zealous persons. One of their first steps was to employ me in the negotiation with the English Government. The Castle, on the other side, endeavoured to rally this party of Lord Kenmare, to whom, as was not unnatural, from his connections and his long nominal lead of the body, many of their principal people adhered. They got them to sign an address, which, in effect, disavowed all the proceedings, and even the authority of the Committee, the negotiation in which I had been employed, and declared that they would gratefully accept of anything Parliament chose to give." The writer then goes on to describe how the Castle, by exciting division among the Catholics, by casting obloquy on the Committee, and by making their Catholic opponents the medium for bestowing a few trifling benefits on the body, flattered itself that it would retain all Irish Catholics at its beck. Accordingly, the Irish Government introduced a Bill, repealing some obsolete restrictions, and conceding to Catholics the profession of the law only. But how delusive was the

expectation that such a paltry boon would satisfy a generous people, resolved by all constitutional means to obtain its just rights, we shall presently see. "As the negotiation," says Richard Burke, "had been so prosperously begun, I resolved to pursue it. When I got to Ireland, the address from Lord Kenmare's party had just been presented. The Castle people and the friends of Government received me with every kind of civility; but it was not difficult to perceive the game they were playing. I was, therefore, obliged to take my part, which naturally was with my Committee, and I found myself at once, involuntarily, in a contest with the Government I had gone over to serve and support. However, I had the pleasure to see an infinite majority of the Catholics declare in favour of the Committee. It was a new fight in Ireland to see columns of newspapers filled with advertisements for meetings, and with spirited public resolutions of Papists. Thus, I found myself, at once, under the name of agent to the Catholics, in effect at the head of a great party. As we had lost the support of the Administration, it was natural to look to the Opposition. I had, from my first going over, received some overtures, and great civility, from Grattan and Curran, and several other members of the party, with whom, indeed, I was before acquainted. At one time, it was not impossible we should have had the whole or the greatest part of the Opposition; but the adversaries contrived to raise such a spirit among the Pro-

testants, as intimidated the greatest number of our Parliamentary friends.”*

Richard Burke then proceeds to describe the fate of the petition for extending to Catholics the elective franchise. It was supported with great zeal and power by Grattan, but received with indignity and insolence by the majority of the House. The petition was, in despite of the talents and spirit displayed by the Opposition, formally rejected.

After stating that one of his chief designs in coming over to Ireland was to connect the Catholics of this country with the Government party, he adds: “But as the Protestant Church Party will not have them, they must take support where they can get it.” This remarkable letter he concludes in these words: “I am sure, however, that it is in the power of Government to quiet all the real uneasiness of the country, and to secure its own stability, whenever it chooses to take the Catholics by the hands.”

Memorable advice of the young statesman, which, if then followed, would have saved Ireland from so much misery and bloodshed, and England from so much danger and disgrace!

Such was the result of the Parliamentary campaign in Ireland during the first six months of Richard Burke’s sojourn in that country.

There is an opinion which the elder and the younger

* “Correspondence,” vol. iii. pp. 490-3.

Burke frequently expresses in this correspondence, but which is contrary to the one most prevalent in this country.

“In Ireland,” says Edmund Burke, “many people think that the Ministers here (that is, in England), instruct the Castle, and that the Castle sets the jobbing ascendancy in motion; whereas it is now wholly, and and has ever since I remember, been for the greater part the *direct contrary*. The junta in Ireland entirely governs the Castle; the Castle, by its representations of the country, governs the Ministry in England. So that the whole evil has always originated, and does still originate, amongst ourselves—that is, in Ireland.”

Burke, in another place, observes that the great fault of the English Government, and of the English political parties, was, that they were too careless, too apathetic about Irish interests, and took their views of Ireland from the dominant party here—a party exclusively Protestant, and bigotedly Protestant. For the Catholics, then shut out from the Legislature, the administration, the magistracy, and even from the profession of the law, had no efficient means of action on the Government or on the Parliament of England, and were befriended here by only one section of the Whigs.

Even before I read this correspondence, the sentiment expressed by Burke had flashed across my own mind. And making due allowance for the altered

condition of things after the lapse of seventy years, the statement here made is still partially true.

The importance of Catholic Emancipation, as involving the national well-being of Ireland, is well put by Edmund Burke, in the following passage :—" I am sure every one," says he, "must be sensible of the truth of Lord Fitzwilliam's remark on seeing it, that the depression of the Catholics in Ireland is not the *persecution of a sect*, but *tyranny over a people*. In three of the provinces of Ireland (out of the cities), it is almost literally true ; in substance and effect, it is true of the whole."*

I shall now proceed to analyze and comment on Burke's famous letter to his old friend, Sir Hercules Langrishe. In December, 1792, he addressed to this Irish Baronet a long letter on the necessity of admitting his Catholic fellow-countrymen to the enjoyment of the elective franchise.

It appeared that Sir Hercules entertained some plan of further indulgence (though clogged with many restrictions), to the Catholics of this country.

" He proposed," he said, " that they should enjoy everything *under the State*, but should not be *the State itself*." His argument is based on what he calls the essential Protestantism of the State. Burke says that, as far as he can conjecture, the scheme is to admit Catholics, *under certain qualifications*, to have some share in the election of members of Parliament. By

* " Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 322.

this project, certain persons of consideration, property, and character, are to be invested with the privilege of electors. The pretext for this exclusiveness is, that among the Catholics some wild and intemperate individuals had, with kindred spirits of other religious creeds, joined in dangerous political associations. Burke points out the impolicy, as well as the injustice of a project that, because of the errors of a certain number of individuals, proscribes an almost entire religious denomination. This was to confound in the same doom the innocent with the guilty.

If it be really true, Burke proceeds to say, that such political disorders are to be found in a certain portion of Irish Catholics, may not the mischief be traced to the penal laws themselves? Did not those execrable laws seek to deprive the people of this country of all education, property, and social influence? Did they not seek to extinguish among them the professional classes, and to divest the few landed proprietors, who had survived the confiscations and ravages of civil warfare, of all social consideration? In the absence of these legitimate influences, how was it possible that the young, the inexperienced, the less educated, the less thrifty, smarting under the sense of old and deep-felt grievances, should not have been, especially in agitated times, seduced into mischievous combinations?

The objections of Sir Hercules Langrishe to an extension of the elective franchise are based on his

notion of the word "State," on his conception of its purely Protestant character, and on the presumed principles of the Revolution of 1688.

Under these three heads, Burke examines the objections of his friend.

I. "The State," says he, "may either mean the *whole Commonwealth*, or the *ruling portion*, commonly called the Government. Those who form no portion of the Commonwealth are in a state of civil servitude. *Servorum non est Respublica.*"

Those, on the other hand, who are excluded from a share in the government of the country "cannot be considered as in a state of absolute slavery, but only in a lower and degraded state of citizenship." In pure aristocracies such a state of things may exist, and may by various circumstances be rendered very tolerable to the masses. In the aristocratic Government of Venice, for example, the bulk of the people, though they had no share of political power, yet enjoyed, by law or by prescriptive usage, the exclusive right of practising certain trades and professions, or of filling certain subordinate offices. "The nobles," says our author, "had the monopoly of power; the plebeians a monopoly of all the means of acquiring wealth."

Such an aristocratic *régime* is incompatible with the British Constitution, wherein the popular element is largely intermixed with the regal and the aristocratic. "How, too," adds the author, "can the seven hundred thousand Protestants of Ireland—men in

position as well as in descent, often so inferior to many among their Catholic fellow-countrymen—be compared with the Venetian aristocracy?"

"A plebeian oligarchy," he justly says, "is a monster; and no people, not absolutely domestic or predial slaves, will long endure it." And while the Catholic masses were at that period excluded from all honours, trusts, and places, even the most subordinate, and prohibited from the exercise of the learned professions; they still had to compete with the Protestants in every laborious and lucrative pursuit of life.

So the parallel between the Venetian aristocracy and the Irish Protestants fails in every point.

"The British Constitution," he proceeds to say, "makes a difference between the franchise and an office; for the former belongs to the *subject as a subject*, and not as a ruling part of the State. Hence, when in former times, the British Parliaments excluded by the Test Acts Protestant Dissenters from employments, civil and military, *they never touched their right of voting for members of Parliament, or of sitting in either House.* And I may observe, that to assert that individuals, unqualified by their condition, property, or education, should not be invested with the elective franchise, is a very different thing from excluding from that privilege whole religious denominations and descriptions of men, however high in other respects may be their qualifications. A body

of men so excluded by an eternal barrier from a share in the Constitution, must end by hating it, and especially its popular part. "Political power," says Burke, "and to an almost unlimited extent, is placed in the hands of an adverse faction, *because it is an adverse faction*. What a door is thus opened to mutual jealousies, suspicions, distrust, contention, and tyrannous injustice! How are the unenfranchised left without influence or control over the Members of Parliament! How do the tradesmen of the excluded class suffer in business by this deprivation of the suffrage! How from the same cause are the more wealthy and high-born bereaved of their legitimate influence! How by this unjust proscription of the masses, are not the fountains of justice troubled, and even polluted!"

II. The next objection of Sir Hercules Langrishe to the granting of the elective franchise to his Catholic fellow-countrymen was based on what he called the essential Protestantism of the State.

Burke replies that the word "Protestantism" was never employed by our Legislators in an indefinite sense; that in reference to the National Church, they ever used the words "Protestant Church, as by law established;" thus defining the Episcopalian Church of the Thirty-nine Articles. He adds that it is the same in the Kirk of Scotland, where the word "Protestantism" is qualified by the Calvinistic creed, and the Presbyterian discipline. "Protestantism," he adds,

“is a mere negation ; and he would be the best Protestant, who should protest against the whole Christian religion.” Here Burke seems to catch a momentary glimpse of the abyss to which the Reformation led ; and then something occurs to draw off his attention.

He proceeds to show that the Coronation Oath, which is alleged by Sir Hercules as an obstacle to a concession of the franchise to Catholics, was destined to guard the Church of England against the doctrines and discipline of the Dissenters, no less than of the Catholics. But when, at the Revolution of 1688, this very Coronation Oath was framed, an Act of Toleration was passed in favour of the Protestant Dissenters. This fact clearly shows that the protection which the Sovereign at his Coronation engages to extend to the “Protestant Church, as established by law,” is by no means inconsistent with any measure of relief he may accord to his subjects, whether Catholic or Nonconformist. Such toleration, instead of weakening, would serve to impart strength to the British Constitution.

It is difficult, observes the author, to define, with scientific accuracy, what laws are fundamental, and what not. Yet, certainly, Magna Charta is a fundamental law, and has always been so considered by the Legislature ; and, at all events, it is not less fundamental than the Bill of Rights, or the Act of Settlement. Now, what does Magna Charta declare ? It declares that no man shall be disseized of his free

liberties and free customs, save by the judgment of his peers, or by the laws of the land, (meaning clearly for some proved crime, tried and adjudged).

Burke draws a just distinction between fundamental laws and subsidiary laws, or laws passed to defend or carry out the former. Thus, the Crown and the personal safety of the monarch are fundamental portions of the Constitution. Yet the various Acts of Parliament in the reigns of Henry VIII., Elizabeth, and Charles II., multiplying to a dangerous extent treasonable offences, have, without the least detriment to the sacred interests they were designed to protect, been expunged from our code.

Such secondary enactments, or statutes of regulation, especially when they have been found to conflict with or imperil other fundamental laws, have been wisely abrogated. "And how much more," says our author, "should not those penal laws be rescinded, which have subverted the fundamental franchises of a whole people, equal to all the inhabitants of several respectable kingdoms and states, equal to the subjects of the kingdoms of Sardinia or of Denmark, equal to those of the United Netherlands, and more than are to be found in all the states of Switzerland."

To show that the establishment of a State religion, and the full toleration of Nonconformists, are things perfectly compatible, Burke alleges the fact, that though the Catholic was the Established Church of France, yet the Edict of Nantes granted to the French

Calvinists full religious freedom. And when, after the rebellion of La Rochelle, Cardinal Richelieu deprived them of their fortified places, he still preserved intact their religious liberties. His conduct has been as much applauded by Europe, as that of Louis XIV. in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes has been condemned.

III. The author now proceeds to meet the objections of his friend to the proposed measure of Catholic relief, as founded on the principles of the Revolution of 1688.

“I cannot possibly,” says he, “confound in my mind all the things which were done at the Revolution with the principles of the Revolution. As in most great changes, many things were done from the necessities of the time, well or ill understood, from passion or from vengeance, which were not only not perfectly agreeable to its principles, but in the most direct contradiction to them. I shall not think that the deprivation of some millions of people of all the rights of citizens, and of all interest in the Constitution in and to which they were born, was a thing conformable to the declared principles of the Revolution.”*

He points out the very different results of the Revolution of 1688 in England and in Ireland. In the one country, it was the defence of the liberties of the people against the arbitrary innovations of James II. “In the other (to use Burke’s words), it was

* P. 333.

the establishment of the power of the smaller number at the expense of the civil liberties and properties of the far greater part; and at the expense of the political liberties of the whole."

I will now endeavour to give, in my own words, a short summary of the author's more lengthened observations.

It has been the misfortune of Ireland that the dominant party long fought to perpetuate the wrongs and violences of the period of conquest—I mean the victory it had achieved in 1691—and never suffered the social elements, even when the first period of violent perturbation had passed away, to settle down in quiet, and obtain a new consistence. In other countries the wounds of civil strife have been healed by the soothing influences of time, as well as by the union of a wise and benevolent policy. Here, factions, tyranny, and religious bigotry kept those wounds perpetually open, and thus retarded the recovery of the patient.

Passing now to the important changes which occurred in this country in 1782, Burke characterises them in their relations to the dominant sect on the one hand, and to the Catholic masses on the other. He shows how those changes produced a more patriotic spirit among the Irish Protestants, and fostered a milder and more liberal temper, that facilitated the relaxation of the Penal Laws. "The true revolution to you," he writes to Sir Hercules, "that which most

intrinsically and substantially resembled the English Revolution of 1688, was the Irish Revolution of 1782. The Irish Parliament of 1782 bore little resemblance to that which sat in that kingdom after the period of the first of these revolutions. It bore a much nearer resemblance to that which sat under King James."

And then he goes on to show that the Irish Parliament, thus reconstituted, and aiming at a more national character, would naturally, in course of time, become more sympathetic with the popular, that is, the Catholic masses.

"When we bring before us the matter," he continues, "which history affords for our selection, it is not improper to examine the spirit of the several precedents which are candidates for our choice."

"Might it not," he exclaims, addressing Sir Hercules, "be as well for your statesmen on the other side of the water to take an example from this latter and more conciliatory Revolution of 1782, as a pattern for your conduct towards your own fellow-citizens, than from that of 1688, when a paramount sovereignty over both you and them was more loftily claimed, and more sternly exerted, than at any former or at any subsequent period? Great Britain, in 1782, rose above the vulgar ideas of policy, the ordinary jealousies of State, and all the sentiments of national pride and national ambition." * So far Burke.

On that occasion, as the author observes, England

* Works, vol. vi. p. 341.

separated the cause of sober and rational patriots from the ill-intentioned and the seditious, and looked rather to the remedy of real and substantial grievances than to the punishment of acts of intemperance and insubordination. He now calls on Sir Hercules and the Irish Parliament to deal with their Catholic fellow-countrymen in the same wise and equitable spirit, as on the occasion adverted to, the English Government had acted towards them. How small was the measure of relief demanded in 1792 by Irish Catholics compared with the large concessions made by England in 1782 to their Protestant fellow-subjects! The repeal of the law passed in the reign of George II. for depriving Irish Catholics of the elective franchise, was surely not an extravagant demand. What evil consequences had ensued to Ireland from the first relaxation of the Penal Code? And when the Irish Parliament had taken the property of a people under the protection of the laws, why should it refuse to admit the same people to some share in the Constitution?

Burke disdains to notice the vulgar diatribes and malicious calumnies against the Catholic Church, as beneath the attention of his friend, or of any other enlightened man. These were brought forward by the more ignorant and fanatical Protestants, as motives for rejecting the just claims of the British and Irish Catholics. These gross misrepresentations, however, though they found not acceptance with enlightened men, yet served at times to obscure their

vision, and to excite towards their Catholic fellow-countrymen a certain alienation of feeling.

Then another unjust charge was, that the bulk of the people of this country was mutinous, disorderly, and easily inflamed by the arts of designing men; and that the sober and wealthy portion of the Catholic community separated themselves from their fellow-religionists, and were not desirous that they should be admitted to any political franchise. Burke scouted the notion of such general disaffection on the part of the Irish Catholics. "And, besides, can any impartial man in the present times," he exclaims, "limit this charge to members of the Catholic community in this country? And, even supposing such a turbulent spirit to exist, is the withholding the redress of real grievances the true way to check it?"

As to discriminating between the temperate and the violent; the most uninformed, the most illiterate can testify to a practical grievance, though its true cause may be beyond the reach of their understanding. It is for the men of education, property, and rank to discover the true causes, and to point out the remedy of the wrongs under which the masses smart.

But if the aims of Irish Catholics were perfectly just and constitutional, the means they generally resorted to for the attainment of those ends were perfectly blameless. The conduct they pursued was in every way worthy of their noble cause. Burke commends the talents and information of several of the

speakers in the Catholic Committee; and says that nothing could be more sober and rational than the views put forth in the speeches delivered at the public meetings held preparatory to the petition to the King for the elective franchise. Those early meetings, where John Keogh, Robert Sweetman, and other Catholic leaders took a prominent part, were the heralds of those celebrated assemblies of thirty years later, whose stirring accents still ring in our ears.

Sir Hercules Langrishe transmitted to Burke some mischievous documents purporting to emanate from the Catholic Body. His friend shows the baronet that these documents bore no signature whatsoever, and that they were utterly at variance with the language and the proceedings of the Catholic Committee, and of the Catholic public meetings. While the Irish Parliament refuses all concessions to their Catholic countrymen, the Protestant Dissenters hold out to them the project of universal suffrage, and endeavour to allure them into associations for carrying out such a scheme. These very overtures on the part of the Dissenters are made a criminal charge against Catholics, and a pretext for their political disqualification; while the former, who are the real authors of the seduction, escape with impunity. Nay, the project itself, however absurd and dangerous, had received the sanction of a few men of rank and property in England, and, at all events, could not be a bar to the acquisition of any political right.

In conclusion, Burke asks his friend, "whether the government in Church and State is likely to be more secure by continuing causes of grounded discontent to a very great number (say two millions) of subjects? or, whether the Constitution, combined and balanced as it is, will be rendered more solid by depriving so large a part of the people of all concern, or interest, or share in its representation, actual or *virtual*?"

* * * * *

"Reflect seriously," he continues to say, "on the possible consequences of keeping in the heart of your country a bank of discontent, every hour accumulating, upon which every description of seditious men may draw at pleasure." *

Such is the analysis I have attempted to give of this excellent letter, which was so frequently on the lips of the illustrious O'Connell, and of the other Irish patriots of the last generation. While it breathes the most ardent patriotism, and the kindest sympathy for the author's Catholic fellow-countrymen, what an intimate knowledge of Irish affairs it displays! what lessons of political wisdom it inculcates! These lessons were, alas! too long neglected—too late carried out.

A few months after the publication of this letter, the Irish Government brought into Parliament a Bill bestowing on Catholics the elective franchise, and, with two or three exceptions, opening to them the

highest grades in the army and navy. Thus, the chief object of the letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe may be said to have been attained.

Burke and his son constantly urged on the Catholics of this country the same advice which the Liberator afterwards gave ; namely, to take every instalment of justice, but never to renounce the hope of full emancipation. Then, again, even at that early period, Burke saw the need which the Irish Catholics had of Constitutional Associations for the acquisition of their just rights ; but, at the same time, the abuses, against which such Associations were to guard, he honestly and fearlessly pointed out.

The law of 1793, which conferred the elective franchise on the Catholics of this country, interdicted all political clubs and societies of what nature and kind soever, and under this law the Catholic Committee was suppressed.

On this subject Burke writes to Dr. Hufsey, in 1793, as follows :—" As to the Committee of lay Catholics," says he, " I was very sorry for a tone of Jacobinism that was adopted by some of its principal members ; but, still more, that it has been dissolved. The bad principle might have been kept under ; *but nothing can save you without some Committee of the kind.* I wish something of the sort re-established. *Your enemies are embodied ;* what becomes of you, *if you are only individuals ?*"

So you see, even at that period of convulsion, when

strong minds were flung off their equilibrium, this great man well discerned the difference between a *Revolutionary Club and a Constitutional Association*. In this passage, too, Burke seems to have had a dim foreknowledge of the brilliant successes that were one day, under the guidance of a great leader, to be achieved by the Catholic Association of Dublin. And yet this is the man whom the shallow sophists of the "Edinburgh Review," and the smartest and cleverest among them all—Lord Brougham—and another writer, who should have known better than these—the brilliant poet, Mr. Thomas Moore—used for a long time to represent as a sort of Monomaniac, possessed of but one idea, and, in his horror of Jacobinism, ready to sacrifice all rights and all liberties of any description whatsoever. If, as they pretended, Burke in the last ten years of his life was guided solely by his imagination, how was it that, with the acknowledgment of the whole world, and of his opponent Fox himself,* so many of his predictions on French and on Irish affairs should have been so literally verified? Is it by the Imagination, or by the Understanding, future probabilities are calculated? The great intellect of Burke,

* Mr. Fox is said more than once to have expressed his astonishment at the singular fulfilment of Burke's predictions. When a nobleman of some political celebrity, in allusion to the vehemence of Burke on the question of Revolutionary politics, hinted an opinion that he was a splendid madman; "Whether mad or inspired," is reported to have been Fox's answer, "fate seems to have determined that he shall be an uncommon political prophet."—"Prior's Life," p. 441.

calm and sagacious, clearly foresaw the coming calamities of Europe ; but his lower and sensitive nature was deeply convulsed by the awful visions that passed before his prophetic eye. And what his depreciators cannot, or pretend not to see, was the union in this mighty mind of the sereneest wisdom with the most splendid imagination and the most fervid sensibility. He himself has said, "The madness of the wise is better than the sobriety of fools." And the same idea has been finely expressed by Lord Byron :—

*"But the wise have a far deeper madness :—
What is it but the telescope of truth,
Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real?"*

Listen now to the wise counsels, which some years later, this great man addressed to his beloved Catholic fellow-countrymen, (and they were among the last words he ever wrote). "I conceive," says he, "that the last disturbances, and those the most important, and which have the deepest root (he alludes to the first disturbances of 1796), do not originate, nor have they the greatest strength among the Catholics ; but there is, and ever has been, a strong republican Protestant faction in Ireland, which has persecuted the Catholics, as long as persecution would answer their purpose ; and now the same faction would dupe them to become accomplices in effectuating the same purposes ; and thus either by tyranny or seduction would accomplish their ruin."*

"Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 321.

Words of wisdom, surely, that breathe the fond solicitude of a parent—a man that might truly be called, *Pater patriæ* ! Let us run over the history of the last eighty years, and we shall surely see, that as long as the Catholics of this country remained true to the teaching of their Church, listened to the voice of their Prelates, and followed the counsels of their natural leaders—a Burke, a Grattan, a Plunkett, an O'Connell—success crowned their exertions, and one by one their constitutional rights were obtained. But so soon as any portion of their body (and, thank God ! it was ever a small minority), despised the teaching of the Church, turned their backs on their Prelates, went after false prophets, imbibed the revolutionary politics of the more violent sectaries of Ulster, and of the Deists of France ; then what but discomfiture, discredit, disgrace, misery, bloodshed, and ruin, have they brought upon their unhappy land ! For they entered upon a path, where success would have been more disastrous than even failure itself.

In perusing the correspondence of the elder and the younger Burke, I have sometimes almost imagined I was reading a pastoral letter from Archbishop Murray or Bishop Doyle, or from some of the eminent Prelates that now adorn the Church of Ireland. There is the same Christian prudence, the same keen sense of wrong, the same manly assertion of right, the same loathing for ferocity, the same detestation of revolutionary violence.

In the year 1794, Young Burke left Ireland, having

won the full confidence of the Catholics, and entitled himself to the respect of his Protestant opponents. As Secretary to the Catholic Committee, he had held an arduous post, in which he displayed not only great talent and activity, but much tact and spirit of conciliation. He now, as was stated in a former Lecture, stood for the borough of Malton, in Yorkshire, which his father had so long represented. The coalition of the most eminent members of the Whig party, such as the Duke of Portland, Earl Spencer, Earl Fitzwilliam, and Mr. Windham, with the Ministry, was this year, as before mentioned, brought about by the mediation of Burke. It was at the same time agreed, that Earl Fitzwilliam should shortly proceed to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant, and that Richard Burke should accompany him as Chief Secretary.

But, alas! the cup of hope tendered to Ireland was soon to be dashed from her lips, and the domestic affliction of Burke was to be aggravated by the sorrows of his country, wronged and deceived. The Secretary, before he had been formally appointed, was snatched away from life, and the Viceroy, after a too brief tenure of office, was suddenly, amidst the tears and laments of an entire nation, recalled from his post. The death of young Burke, and the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam, were, indeed, deplorable events—omens of the dire calamities that were soon after to burst over this devoted land.

In January, 1795, Earl Fitzwilliam took his depar-

ture from England, and, as Lord-Lieutenant, landed on these shores, amid the enthusiastic greetings of the people. It was well understood that, with the sanction of the English Government, he had come over to carry out a full and complete measure of Catholic Emancipation. Grattan now brought into the Irish Parliament a Bill to this effect; and the hopes of Irish Catholics were exalted to the highest pitch. Mr. Cooke, whom Burke characterizes "as a conceited, arrogant puppy," was dismissed from the Castle, and so were other creatures of the powerful family of the Beresfords. The ascendancy faction in this country immediately excited the apprehensions of the British Government; and, most unfortunately for his reputation, Mr. Pitt gave way, on this occasion, to the strong prejudices of George III., as well as of some members of his own party. After only two months' tenure of office, Earl Fitzwilliam was recalled. The Duke of Portland, hitherto a staunch friend of the Catholics, evinced, on this occasion, a deplorable weakness. The excellent Windham, between whom and Burke existed a perfect sympathy of political sentiments, deeply regretted the measure adopted by the majority of his colleagues in the Cabinet, and did not venture to communicate to his friend the sad intelligence. It was from the newspapers Burke first learned the melancholy fact. So all the schemes he and his lost loved son had cherished for building up Ireland's freedom and Ireland's glory, were to vanish as a dream; and

in his cup of domestic grief a nation's tears were to be mingled. This recall of Earl Fitzwilliam from the Viceroyalty, which was the prelude to eight years of misery, bloodshed, and convulsion, was the greatest error committed by Pitt in the whole course of his long administration. His friends, and, among others, his kinsman, Earl Stanhope, allege as an excuse for this most fatal measure, the precipitancy evinced by Earl Fitzwilliam in the management of affairs. But supposing even this statement to be correct, what is precipitancy or excessive ardour in the prosecution of measures admitted to be wise and salutary, compared with the folly—I should rather say the madness—the criminality of spurning the just and constitutional demands of an entire people!

The recall of the Viceroy spread grief and consternation throughout all Ireland. Addresses, petitions, and remonstrances, poured in from all quarters, but in vain. The day of this nobleman's departure was a day of mourning for Dublin; all business was suspended; and the most respectable citizens accompanied his carriage to the water-side.

As soon as the intelligence of the intended change of policy had reached Ireland, Bishop Hufsey addressed to Burke these memorable words:—"The disastrous news, my dear sir, of Earl Fitzwilliam's recall is come; and Ireland is now on the brink of a civil war." *

On this sad occasion, Burke wrote to Sir Hercules

"Correspondence," vol. iv.

Langrishe a second letter, expressive of his deep sorrow at the unwise as well as cruel measure adopted by the English Cabinet. "I really thought," he says, "among other things, that in the total of the late circumstances with regard to persons, to things, to principles, and to measures, was to be found a conjuncture favourable to the introduction and to the perpetuation of a general harmony, producing a general strength, which to that hour Ireland was never so happy as to enjoy. My sanguine hopes are blasted; I must consign my feelings on that terrible disappointment to the same patience in which I have been obliged to bury the vexation I suffered on the defeat of the other great, just, and honourable causes in which I have had some share, and which have given more of dignity than of peace and advantage to a long and laborious life."

In the last two or three years of his life, Burke carried on with Dr. Hufsey, Catholic Bishop of Waterford, a most interesting correspondence.

This virtuous and learned prelate, whose mind and manners had been refined by travel and polite society, had enjoyed for many years the friendship of Burke. I have learned, on good authority, that the great statesman would sometimes repair secretly to the tribune of the Spanish Ambassador's Chapel in London, in order to have the gratification of hearing a sermon from his right reverend friend.*

* Burke, in one of his letters, alludes to this fact.

The critical state of Ireland, in the last two or three years of his life, much engaged the attention of Burke, and on this subject he opened his mind very freely to Bishop Hufsey. In their political views, whether on Continental or on Irish affairs, there was a perfect sympathy between the two friends. The dangers menacing Ireland from the Orange-ascendancy party on the one hand, and from the spread of French Revolutionary principles on the other, filled the minds of the Prelate and of the statesman with the like dismay.

The internal arrangements, too, of the Catholic Church in Ireland, and especially the foundation of the seminary of Maynooth, were matters in which Burke took the liveliest interest. In regard to this institution, which Dr. Hufsey, with the sanction of the British Government, was then engaged in establishing, the statesman strongly urges on his episcopal friend the advantage of combining ornamental with professional studies. The enlarged endowment of Maynooth has permitted this plan to be more effectually carried out ; and to none surely could such a task be more fittingly entrusted than to the distinguished ecclesiastic, and the elegant and accomplished scholar, who now presides over that important establishment. Burke points out to Dr. Hufsey the expediency of laying before Parliament periodical reports of the expenditure incurred in the administration of that seminary ; but any interference, however

indirect, on the part of the British Government in its internal management, he strongly deprecates.

Then, with regard to the nomination of the Catholic Bishops, and other important matters of ecclesiastical discipline, Burke shows himself almost as jealous of the independence and purity of the Irish Church, as the great O'Connell himself.

In one of his letters to a friend he holds up the Catholic Church of Ireland as approaching very nearly to the model of the primitive Apostolic Church. And let it not be supposed that it was merely her *poverty* that suggested to his mind that resemblance; for, in that respect, the Vaudois pastors in the Alpine valleys, and the Lutheran ministers in Northern Germany, whom the Reformation has left poor enough, might put in a claim to Apostolicity. No; it was the constitution and discipline, and (though more dimly to his apprehension) the doctrines of the Irish Church, combined with the absence of wealth and political power, which made him assimilate her to the Apostolic model.

In another letter he makes some excellent observations on the different kinds of education required for a Catholic priest and a Protestant pastor. His sketch of the present degeneracy of the Greek schismatical clergy is most graphic; and shows the acuteness of his mind, and his accurate information on topics that lay out of the path of his ordinary pursuits. Indeed, the whole of this Correspondence, which I have pre-

viouſly ſpoken of, is one of the moſt valuable acceſſions made to our recent literature ; for not only does it throw great light on the biography of the illuſtrious ſtateſman, and on the hiſtory of his momentous times, but it places his character in a moſt amiable light, and furniſhes further proofs of his amazing verſatility of mind, and of his varied ſtores of knowledge. It is much to be regretted that his executors had not publiſhed that correſpondence twenty or thirty years ſooner, for it would have gone far to ſilence the clamorous revilers of his political principles.*

Grief for his ſon's loſs, which had cauſed Burke ſo many ſleepleſs nights, added to profound diſcouragement at the ſtate of public affairs, had by degrees undermined his conſtitution. He daily became weaker and more emaciated, till, in the month of February, 1797, he was adviſed by his phyſicians to try the efficacy of the Bath waters. Thither he was now accompanied by his faithful friend, Windham, and, on his arrival at Bath, he was joined by another attached friend, Dr. French Laurence. The air and waters of the place were productive of little benefit to the illuſtrious patient. His debility and pains ſeemed rather to increaſe, and he became anxious to

* Lord Jeffrey, who in the *Edinburgh Review* had ſo long affailed the political principles of Burke, on reading, in his old age, this correſpondence, exclaimed, on laying down the volumes: "The greateſt and moſt accompliſhed intellect that England has produced for centuries : and of a noble and loveable nature."—"Cockburn's Life of Lord Jeffrey," vol. i. p. 397.

return home, there to rest his bones. The political state of the Continent and of his own country still engaged his active mind; nor were the interests of his friends ever absent from his thoughts. From his sick couch he dictated letters both on public and on private affairs. To Mrs. Leadbeater, the daughter of his old friend and schoolfellow, Mr. Shackleton, he dictated a letter, one of the last he ever signed, in which we find the following beautiful passage, so expressive of humble hope. "I have been at Bath," says he, "these four months to no purpose, and am therefore to be removed to my own house at Beaconsfield to-morrow, to be nearer to a habitation more permanent, humbly and fearfully hoping that my better part may find a better mansion."

After a slow journey, he arrived at Beaconsfield in the beginning of June, 1797.

Soon after his return home he writes to his friend, Dr. Laurence, "To whatever part of the compass I turn my eyes, I see nothing but difficulty and disaster." And was it not so? In England he saw much political disaffection, and even a mutiny in the navy: in Italy the first victories of General Bonaparte, whom he lives to name, over the Allies; and in his own dear country he beheld the sad preludes of civil warfare. Thus, before his dying eyes, whichever way he casts them, nothing appears but lugubrious signs and omens of destruction, *diræ formæ, ac horribiles visu*. In the North, he is startled by the low, hollow murmur

which precedes the tempest. In the South he beholds, as the revolutionary earthquake has become less violent in its oscillations, a menacing meteor just rising above the horizon, and which, by its magnitude and brilliancy, as well as by its erratic course, is for the next twenty years to fill the nations of Europe with alternate admiration, awe, and terror. And over his own Western isle he sees the play of the distant lightning, and the thunder-clouds gathering thick and fast, and which, alas ! soon after he is laid in the tomb, are to burst forth in a terrific tempest.

But Providence, in its mercy, spared him the tragic spectacle.

He expired on the 9th day of July, 1797, at his seat at Beaconsfield. He was said to be in his sixty-eighth year; but there are good reasons for believing that he was turned of seventy. "His end," says Dr. French Laurence, "was suited to the simple greatness of mind which he displayed through life, every way unaffected, without levity, without ostentation, full of natural grace and dignity. He appeared neither to wish nor to dread, but patiently and placidly to await the hour of his dissolution.

"He had been listening to some essays of Addison's, in which he ever took delight ; he had recommended himself in many affectionate messages to the remembrance of those absent friends whom he had never ceased to love ; he had conversed some time with his accustomed force of thought and expression on the

awful situation of his country, for the welfare of which his heart was interested to the very last beat ; he had given, with steady composure, some private directions, in contemplation of his approaching death, when, as his attendants were conveying him to bed, he sank down, and, after a short struggle, passed quietly, and without a groan to eternal rest in that mercy which he had just declared he had long sought with unfeigned humiliation, and to which he looked with a trembling hope." So far his friend, Dr. French Laurence. I may add, that in the last days of his illness he derived much consolation from the perusal of Mr. Wilberforce's book on Christianity, which had just appeared.

On the fifteenth day of July, 1797, the funeral took place. A number of distinguished members of both Houses of Parliament, and the neighbouring gentry, as well as other personal friends, came to pay the last honours to the departed statesman. The pall was borne by Sir Gilbert Elliot (afterwards Earl of Minto), the Speaker of the House of Commons (afterwards Lord Sidmouth), the Duke of Portland, the Earl Fitzwilliam, the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Inchiquin (afterwards Marquis of Thomond), Right Hon. Mr. Windham, and the Lord Chancellor, Lord Loughborough (afterwards Earl of Roslyn). The funeral *cortège* was swelled by a large body of the poorer classes, who showed, by their demeanour, how great a benefactor they had lost.

Burke in his will had expressed a wish that his funeral should be strictly private, and that his remains should be laid in Beaconsfield Church, beside those of his beloved son and brother. Thus, by his own desire, was the cemetery of the illustrious dead—Westminster Abbey—bereaved of the ashes of one, who would surely have imparted to it a new glory.

Mrs. Burke, whom her husband, in his will, called “his entirely beloved and incomparable wife,” lived at Beaconsfield, honoured and respected, till the year 1812, when she died, in her seventy-eighth year.

The beautiful mansion, adorned within by graceful sculptures, and surrounded by charming meadows and magnificent trees—the resort of wits and nobles—visited by Johnson, who there congratulated his friend on his worldly prosperity, and graced by the presence of the exiled Royalty of France, this mansion was, in the year 1813, accidentally burnt down; and of the buildings, nought remains but the stables, where the celebrated Windham* used to put up his horse, when

* I had purposed to devote some space to an account of this most eminent and virtuous statesman; but press of matter has prevented my doing so. William Windham was born in 1750, and was of an ancient family in the county of Norfolk. He was remarkable for his manly integrity and virtue, and fascinating manners, as well as for his elegant literary tastes and accomplishments, his wit and humour, and his refined and ingenious style of eloquence. He was the devoted friend, first of Johnson, and then of Burke. No contemporary so well understood and so heartily sympathized with Burke’s political views in respect to the affairs either of England, Ireland, or revolutionary France. And when, in 1793, he, with other friends, joined the administra-

he rode down from town to urge on his illustrious friend in the composition of his last great work—the “Letters on a Regicide Peace.”

“Burke’s moral character,” says Prior, “stood unimpeached by anything that approached to vice.” “The unspotted innocence, the firm integrity of Burke,” says Dr. Parr, “want no emblazoning ; and if he is accustomed to exact a vigorous account of the moral conduct of others (in public matters), it is justified in one who shuns not the most inquisitorial scrutiny into his own.”

He was, indeed, a man exemplary in all the relations of life—a faithful, loving husband—an affectionate parent—a generous relative—a kind master—a devoted friend. He was charitable to the poor, as well as a liberal patron of indigent merit. In common with others, the poet Crabbe, whom, to his eternal honour, he aided in his early struggles, bears ample testimony to the many virtues which adorned his character. He speaks “of his private worth, of his wishes to do good, of his affability and condescension, his readiness to lend assistance where he knew it was
tion of Mr. Pitt, he endeavoured, but often in vain, to enforce in the Cabinet the wise policy of Burke. His unswerving fidelity to Johnson and Burke (and his friendship was warmly reciprocated by those two great men), has something in it extremely touching. He died in the year 1810. The *Edinburgh Review* once said, “That of the great constellation formed by the mighty minds of Burke and Fox, and Pitt and Nelson, almost the last star set at the death of Windham.”—
Vol. xvii. p. 254.

wanted, and his delight to give praise where he thought it was deserved."

A monument of this great man's benevolence was the school he established at Penn, in Buckinghamshire, for the education of the sons of the French emigrants. By his mediation, and that of the Marquis of Buckingham, he obtained from Mr. Pitt, for this Institution, an annual allowance of six hundred pounds. This School, which was three miles distant from Beaconsfield, he often visited, watching over the students with a truly parental care. Here Chateaubriand had on one occasion the honour of being introduced to Burke, and in his Memoirs bears witness to the affectionate interest which this excellent man evinced in the welfare of the pupils. Many of them afterwards, under the Restoration, filled posts of honour and distinction, and retained a lively remembrance of their great benefactor. Indeed, when I myself visited France at that period, I found that the Royalists regarded Burke as one of their greatest political oracles, and never pronounced his name but with feelings of gratitude and respect.

Of his Christian fortitude and resignation to the Divine Will, he gave a signal proof under that heavy bereavement he sustained—the loss of his beloved son in the early bloom of a promising life. The great humility, too, of Burke has always appeared to me one of the most attractive features in his character.

Like many men of generous nature, his temper was

quick—nay, sometimes irritable. And there were periods in his Parliamentary career when, as Lord Macaulay observes, that irascible temper was most severely tried. But if it was sometimes ruffled by the contests of the Senate, it never marred the quiet of his domestic circle. He was wont to say, “that every care vanished the moment he entered under his own roof.”

All the high moral qualities I have enumerated rested on a firm basis of unaffected piety. Burke was a firm believer in the Christian Revelation, and a sincere member of the Church of England, in whose communion he had been brought up. “Like Johnson,” says Mr. Prior, “he viewed Roman Catholics with more favour than others were inclined to show, and latterly much more than at an earlier period.”* This observation is most just; and in my first Lecture I had occasion to notice the same fact. From many passages in the writings, and in the conversations of these two great men, I feel convinced that, had they lived in our times, they would in all probability have become Catholics, or at all events, if not favoured with that special grace, very advanced Tractarians.

A respectable publisher of this city has assured me that he once read in a Catholic periodical the following anecdote:—In a religious conversation between Burke and Dr. Hufsey, the latter urged on his Protestant friend the argument so well worked out by

* Life, p. 474.

Nicole and other French Divines in the “*Perpétuité de la Foi*,” that on the doctrines controverted between the Catholic Church and the Reformers of the sixteenth century, not only the Greek schismatics, but the Nestorian and Eutychian sectaries, who separated from Catholic communion in the first part of the fifth century, are, except on one point, in perfect agreement with the Catholic Church. And even on that point—the Papal Supremacy—their denial is more practical than theoretic. The errors respecting the Person of our Lord, peculiar to these heretics, were rejected by the Reformers as well as by Catholics.

Burke, in reply to his friend, observed with amazement, that this concurrence between hostile Churches was an argument of *immense weight*.

This conversation I have not been able myself to certify. But it is antecedently probable—first, from the very confidential relations existing between the two friends; and, secondly, from a passage in one of Burke’s speeches. He there observes that the Roman Catholic Church is at least (note the force of those words “AT LEAST”), “the Roman Catholic Church is *at least* coeval with the foundation of the modern kingdoms of Europe.”

Why, this takes us back to the sixth, and even the fifth century, when the General Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon condemned those Nestorian and Eutychian heresies, to which allusion has been made, and whose followers, even after their separation from the

Church, retained such a vast amount of Catholic doctrine.

I shall now say a few words on the intellectual qualities of the great man, whose moral character I have attempted to depict.

Burke's conversational powers were the admiration of all who had the happiness of being admitted to his society. My old friend, Mr. Charles Butler, who was well acquainted with him, as well as with most of his celebrated contemporaries, once described to me his conversation as being most instructive, copious, and diversified ; but he added, that from his own professional duties, he was prevented from indulging, as much as he could have wished, in the luxury of listening to it.

Burke's wit and humour, whether in public or in private, were unbounded. His mind seemed an ever-flowing fountain. Dr. Johnson's saying is well known. "No man of sense," he often repeated, "could meet Mr. Burke by accident, under a gateway, to avoid a shower, without being convinced he was the first man in England." And this dictum of the great critic was strangely corroborated by a singular anecdote related by Mr. Prior. Two friends were one day visiting the cathedral of Lichfield—the birthplace of the illustrious Johnson—when one of the canons came up to the strangers, and begged leave to conduct them over the church. There one of them displayed so much historical and architectural knowledge, and threw out such

profound and original ideas, as struck the canon with amazement. When the strangers had taken leave of him, he hastened back to his house, and said to the first friends he encountered, "I have had quite an adventure this morning. I have just met the most extraordinary man I ever conversed with in life—so full of genius, and of information of every kind. I intend going down to the inn, to inquire who he can be." It turned out on inquiry that this stranger was the celebrated Edmund Burke. I need not say how much the canon and his friends regretted that they had not had the honour of a personal introduction to the great man.

Now to speak of the learning of Burke. He was well versed in Greek and Latin literature ; was familiar with the great masters of his own language ; and had read the best models of the French. Ancient and modern history he had deeply studied : he was, in the opinion of his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, an admirable connoisseur in art ; and he was not unfamiliar with some of the natural sciences. To theology and philosophy he had paid considerable attention. His acquaintance with English law astonished professional men themselves ; while from the Roman jurisprudence he not unfrequently drew happy illustrations. He did not disdain inquiry into the handicrafts, and, as is said of Shakspeare, he loved to converse with labourers and mechanics about their trades. He was a skilful practical agriculturist ; in matters of commerce and finance he was exceedingly well versed ; and, indeed, in the

whole science of economics he was far beyond his age.

If we now turn to the eloquence of Burke, we are struck with his exquisite taste in selecting Dryden and Bolingbroke as the models on which he chiefly formed his style..

Dryden was certainly one of the first who polished and refined our prose. If he possessed not the majesty of Hooker, nor the vigour of Milton, nor the exuberant fancy of Jeremy Taylor, he introduced a lighter structure of period, and a more easy flow of diction. To the ease and purity of Dryden's style, Bolingbroke united much greater animation and force of eloquence.

How well Burke imitated the style of the latter, in his "Vindication of Natural Society," which many, as we have seen, took for a posthumous production of the eloquent St. John, I have already had occasion to show. The selection of such models was the more laudable on the part of one, who was the friend of Johnson and the contemporary of Gibbon—writers whose vigour of thought and of expression was so often marred, in one case by turgidness of diction, in the other, by the too frequent recurrence of antithesis, and by a monotonous cadence of period. Even the elegant historian of America is not wholly free from a certain formality of style.

Yet Burke rose far above the models of his youth. His style, pure, clear, energetic, copious, flexible, harmonious, adapts itself to the subject-matter of his dis-

course. He uses with uncommon skill the two elements in our language—the Saxon and the Latin—making, like all our great masters, the former the main substantial web of speech, and the latter its ornate intertexture. His periods are finely modulated, now quick and lively, now flow and solemn, now melodious as a lute, now pealing like the majestic organ. Far from that uniformity of style, where, from the first member of a sentence, we know what the concluding one will be, we here see the greatest variety in the construction of the periods—the boldest inversions, and the happiest forms of ellipsis. “Burke,” as Charles Butler well remarks, “uses common, and even low words, with striking effect.” He rarely employs the simile, but delights in the metaphor. He draws his figures not only from external nature and art, but from history and fable, from the natural sciences, and the common handicrafts. He is rich, and even lavish, in the use of imagery; but this is never introduced for the sake of ostentatious display, but in order to enforce or illustrate an argument.

If I now pass from what may be called the external accidents to the substance of his eloquence, the following remarks will, I think, be found correct. His narration of facts is most lucid; the most complicated case he unravels with admirable skill. The arrangement of his topics, without being too formal, is clear and logical. He selects and marshals his arguments

with singular art, grouping them in masses, illumining them with historical illustrations, or with philosophic reflections, or adorning them with the splendour of description ; now guarding them by the light musketry of wit and raillery, now supporting them by the heavy artillery of invective, till by the well-ordered phalanx of the most various powers, he bears down all resistance, and carries the position by storm.

Lord Brougham, in his "Lives of the Statesmen of George III.," after a very high encomium on Burke's eloquence, says, "that he excelled in every variety of style, except the plain and unadorned." The latter assertion is certainly incorrect. Let any one read the Reports of the Parliamentary Committees on East India Affairs, and which were framed by Burke, and fill a volume of his collected works, and he will be struck with the severe simplicity of the language, as well as with the laborious research there displayed. The same may be predicated of the Address to the King, drawn up by him on the dissolution of the Parliament in 1783. Indeed, he was very successful in what is called the State-Paper style. Nay, there are orations by this great man, like the majestic speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill, like many of those delivered on Hastings's Impeachment, like the Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, as well as large portions of his other speeches and compositions, where we notice a marked sobriety of ornament. That such is the characteristic of his correspondence, it would be

superfluous to observe. The fact is, that it is only when his feelings are strongly excited, Burke puts forth the gorgeous colours of his imagination. The splendour of his fancy seems then the reflex of that fire, which glows within his soul. In describing the eloquence of Antonius, Cicero has in part depicted that of Burke: "Forte, vehemens, commotum in agendo, præmunitum et ex omni parte causæ septum, acre, acutum, enucleatum, in unâquaque re commorans, honeste cedens, acriter insequens, terrens, supplicans, summâ orationis varietate, nullâ nostrarum aurium satietate."

Had Burke died in 1780, the British Senate would have felt it had lost the brightest ornament it had ever possessed. But in the ten years which followed, the speech to the Electors of Bristol, the speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill, that on the payment of the Nabob of Arcot's debts, the speeches on the Impeachment of Warren Hastings, considerably raised his reputation. Yet, had this great orator departed this life in 1788, after having concluded the opening speech on that Impeachment, and pronounced that grand peroration, which Windham declared was the sublimest ever uttered by man, England, Ireland, and Europe would not have known how great a genius they had lost. But it was the stirring events of 1789, that brought to the surface all the priceless pearls, that had long lain hidden in the depths of that mighty mind.

To speak now of some literary defects in this great

writer and orator, it cannot be denied, as a very judicious and friendly critic in the *Quarterly Review* once observed, that his metaphors are sometimes harsh and overstrained, and carried out into too minute details. The habit of amplification, also, to a certain extent necessary in speeches, Burke carried sometimes into his written compositions, where the same license is not permitted. "This occasional diffuseness," well observes the *Quarterly Review*, "is manifestly not the result of any barrenness or languor of ideas, but of an intense anxiety to impress his own opinions on the reasons and the passions of mankind."

The same oratorical habits, in my opinion, led him, now and then, into the use of incongruous words, and even phrases, that disfigure the beauty of exquisite passages. From the time of Demosthenes downwards, certain words and expressions allowed to orators, have not been permitted to writers. In his writings, as well as in his speeches, there is not unfrequently a redundancy of epithets. As to an occasional coarseness of language to be found in the speeches, this was a defect common to our political orators of the last century. Expressions used then in the House of Commons, the refinement of modern manners would not now endure.

Yet when we consider the rapidity with which Burke wrote—the quantity and the matchless quality of his compositions—the fact, too, that some of his writings had not received at his hands the last revision—how

small are the defects I have pointed out! These are spots on the sun, and must not diminish our admiration for one whom the best critics, foreign as well as native, consider one of the greatest of modern European writers.

The preceding observations will perhaps be rendered clearer by a comparison.

The eloquence of this great man may be compared to a majestic river, now winding its course slowly along, now foaming and chafing amid the rocks, now overleaping the barriers, now rushing headlong down in flashing cataract, now throwing up the brilliant spray, now circling in rapid, boiling eddies, here and there casting up weeds and mire in its turbid current, or even at times overrunning its banks, and now again in its broad, clear, unruffled bed, reflecting the rich verdure of earth, and the bright hues of Heaven.

We have already seen the high estimation in which Burke was held by the leading members of the Monarchical party of France.

In Germany, also, and more especially in Catholic Germany, his political principles were as justly appreciated, as his genius was admired. In the Prussian publicist, Gentz, who later entered into the service of Austria, he found an able translator, and an enlightened commentator. By his great political sagacity, his rare knowledge of affairs, and his polished style, Gentz showed himself worthy of his master, and for

upwards of thirty years after Burke's death, carried on a vigorous warfare against the Revolution.

The great Catholic critic and philosopher, Frederick Schlegel, pays the following tribute to the genius of Burke, as well as to the services he rendered to European society:—"If we are to praise a man," says he, "in proportion to his usefulness, I am persuaded that no task can be more difficult than that of doing justice to the statesman and orator Burke. This man has been to his own country, and to all Europe—in a very particular manner to Germany—a new light of political wisdom and moral experience. He corrected his age, when it was at the height of its revolutionary frenzy; and without maintaining any system of philosophy, he seems to have seen farther into the true nature of society, and to have more clearly comprehended the effect of religion in connecting individual security with national welfare, than any philosopher, or any system of philosophy, of any preceding age."*

Elsewhere this writer calls him the founder of a great school of political Conservatives in Europe.†

Just before the star of Burke had sunk beneath the horizon, another great luminary arose in the opposite quarter of the heavens, and shed on some of the most important questions of moral and political philosophy a new and brilliant light. This was the illustrious Frenchman, the Viscount de Bonald, who under the

* "Lectures on Literature," vol. ii., p. 278.

† "Concordia, a Philosophical Journal," Vienna, 1820.

First Napoleon, and during the Restoration, was to play so important a part in the literature and the politics of his country. In his first work, published in 1795, when he was still an emigrant, and entitled, "*Théorie du Pouvoir Religieux et Politique*," he modestly expresses a hope, "that should his book fall under the eye of that eminent publicist, Mr. Burke, it would be fortunate enough to meet with his approval."

This passage I cite, in order to show how the great man who has been the subject of these Lectures, was regarded by his most distinguished foreign contemporaries as an oracle of political wisdom.

But in his special controversy with the French—or rather the European Revolution—Burke found two noble Catholic rivals; one a junior contemporary, the other belonging to a later generation. The first was the Savoyard nobleman, Count de Maistre; the second, the German professor, Joseph von Görres.

In the very year of Burke's death, 1797, De Maistre astonished Europe by his first great work, entitled, "*Considérations sur la France*," a work destined to be the precursor of so many master-pieces. The book is distinguished for a metaphysical subtlety not to be found in the writings of the Irish statesman.

The anti-Christian spirit of the French Revolution, as well as its anti-social character, is there well depicted. The mysterious dispensations of Divine Providence in that mighty drama are laid open with a

master's hand. On leaving the earth, our great political seer seems to have dropped on the young Savoyard nobleman his mantle of prophecy. The latter foretells that the return of Monarchy, with its concomitant institutions, will sooner or later be accomplished ; and he adds, that Monarchy, to be solid and permanent, must be in the legitimate line. He shows that, under its protection, property of every description will be secure ; animosities will be allayed ; quiet and confidence restored ; prosperity revive, and a general peace be re-established. But the main hope of France, he says, is in the revival of religion.

The style of the work is very lively and vigorous ; but as it is of a more meditative cast than Burke's "Reflections," the eloquence is naturally of a more temperate and subdued kind.

Two works of Görres, one published in 1819, the other in 1821, and respectively entitled "Germany and the Revolution," and "Europe and the Revolution," challenge, both from their subject and execution, a comparison with the admirable productions of the French and Irish publicists. These two works of the German Professor, especially the last, amaze us by the grasp of comprehension—the wide range of observation—the depth of reflection—the extent of learning—and the vigour and condensation of the style. They produced in Germany nearly the same thrilling, electrical effect, as Burke's "Reflections" had caused in Great Britain thirty years before.

The moral and political evils under which Catholic and Protestant Germany laboured—the Rationalism in the one, the enslavement of the Catholic Church in the other—and in both divisions, the struggles between the Bureaucratic Absolutism and the Revolutionary Liberalism—these evils are denounced with a terrible energy by the great German publicist. His eloquence flows in a stream, strong and rapid, indeed, but far more turbid than that found in the pages either of the Irish or of the French writer. The style too much abounds in recondite metaphors drawn from the physical sciences, as well as in learned allusions to the Heathen Mythology. But the characteristic traits of each nation, and the leading events in the history of each, as well as the influence of religious and political institutions upon both, are traced in a few vigorous strokes by the hand of a mighty master.

Those who would penetrate into the essence of the French Revolution, who would study its rise and progress, and the action it has exerted over France and Europe, and would, moreover, learn the means of counteracting its evil doctrines and evil examples, could do nothing better than ponder over the pages of the three great writers, Burke, De Maistre, and Görres, whom I have ventured to compare.

But Burke was the herald of these illustrious men. He was the watchman that first read the tempestuous signs in the heavens—the seer whom Providence raised

up to warn a guilty world of the heavy judgments that were soon to overtake it. I cannot better conclude than with the lines of his youthful panegyrist, George Canning :—

*“ Lamented Sage ! whose prescient scan
Pierc'd though foul Anarchy's gigantic plan,
Prompt to incredulous hearers to disclose
The guilt of France, and Europe's world of woes :—
Thou on whose name each distant age shall gaze,
The mighty sea-mark of these troublous days ;
Oh ! large of soul, of genius unconfin'd,
Born to delight, instruct, improve mankind ! ”*

APPENDIX.

NOTE TO THIRD LECTURE, *p.* 133.

THAT community of interests and of sentiments between the Upper and the Lower House was the result of several causes. First, the most ancient lineage, and often the amplest possessions are to be found in the untitled gentry of England, and consequently, they possess a perfect identity of feelings and of interests with the high aristocracy. Secondly, the sons of peers are commoners, and can be, and are frequently, representatives in the House of Commons. Thirdly, by the close-borough system, the Crown, the aristocracy, and the gentry, could counterbalance the popular element in the Lower House.

Burke was the last man to wish to exclude the Commonalty from their due share in the representation; and I make no doubt that, had he lived, he would have been willing, long before the event occurred, to concede to such opulent cities as Birmingham, Manchester, and Leeds, the elective franchise. This refusal, I may say in passing, was one of the greatest errors ever committed by the Conservative party. No man better understood than Burke, the delicate and complicated machinery of the old House of Commons.

If any reader should think, that in the text the importance of this close union between the two Houses of our Legis-

lature has been overrated, let him consider the fate of the various Continental imitations of the British Constitution, which the last eighty years have witnessed ! What has become of all those Constitutions whose existence was as ephemeral as it was agitated ? They are gone. They resembled our Constitution only in its *outward forms*, but not in its *internal organism*.

Even the Reform Act of 1832 has not yet stood the test of time ; for in the last thirty years there has been no unpopular King or Minister—no scandals at Court, very few wide-spread discontents, no protracted war, no armed coalition against Great Britain, no naval or military reverses, no loss of colonies ;—yet these are the things which test the strength of a Government.

As to the recent and still more extensive changes made in the Constitution, I shall, for obvious reasons, forbear to make any comment. I may, however, be permitted to observe, in passing, that the dangers incident to popular suffrage are not so much in ratio to its extent as to its concentration in certain classes, less subject than others to the legitimate influences of rank, property, education, and intelligence. Yet under the system of universal suffrage, or of anything approximating to it, the result of popular elections will always be precarious. A thousand accidents will sway the popular mind, sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another ; and a steady, uniform, consecutive policy, whether foreign or internal, will be simply out of the question. And this is more especially true of a country like Great Britain, where happily, a strong bureaucratic centralization does not exist.

It is true that the Legislature could do away with the close-borough system, and render the House of Commons much more popular in its constitution, than formerly. But that Legislature could not, and cannot, reverse the eternal

laws of social order; it could not, and cannot, adapt a democratic government to the wants of a mighty empire like ours, with its various classes, and its complicated interests.

Under the most favourable auspices was such a system tried in the New World. Thither the turbulent, yet enterprising sons of England, carried from their homes, with their burning religious fanaticism, the sacred fire of old political traditions, excellent laws and institutions of their mother-country; there they were trained in the discipline of representative government; there they could spread over an illimitable tract of territory; there land was most easy of acquisition; there employment was facile and abundant; there, after the establishment of their independence, they had no rivals to compete with, no enemies to encounter; there, for a long time, except in a very few cities, was really no populace, and consequently few elements for the demagogue to work on; there, until lately, in the South was a powerful landed proprietary, and a large slave population, that, as in the ancient Republics, served to break the force of the Democracy. And yet, in despite of all these rare—I may say, unique—advantages, the American State, which had been gradually sinking from a Republic to an Ochlocracy, is, after a brief existence of eighty years, in the perilous condition wherein we now behold it! Seventy years ago the great Count de Maistre, speaking of that Republic, said, “*Laissez cet enfant grandir, et alors nous verrons.*” The child has grown up, and is found to have outgrown its first garment. Yet out of the recent concussion, several independent Republics will probably spring up; for the Northern continent is vast enough to hold several independent states, and to their mutual advantage. May a people so well entitled for many reasons to our sympathy and respect, long enjoy the peace and prosperity it so well deserves!

But in Great Britain, where the circumstances are so totally different, the triumph of democracy would bring about a general disorganization of the empire. Great as are the dangers presented by the spread of democratic principles, as well as by the immense force recently given to the popular element in our constitution, those dangers are infinitely aggravated by the ever-growing prevalence in England of irreligious doctrines. Those doctrines, whether in the form of Rationalism, Deism, Materialism, or Atheism, are now sedulously inculcated in elaborate works, in literary reviews, scientific journals, pamphlets, newspapers, tracts, adapted to every variety of readers—in the high, the middle, and the lower classes—distinguished, too, in many cases, for considerable ability, and enjoying very wide circulation. Thus every engine of destruction is brought to bear against the institutions of our unfortunate country.

Nor have all the perils of the situation been yet stated. The levelling political principles of several of the dissenting sects, which in tranquil times have long lain dormant, would, in the event of a great political crisis, revive with mischievous activity. Many of these Nonconformists would, in that case, join with the Godless Radicals in making war on the prerogatives of the Crown, the rights of the Peerage, and on the laws which regulate its property; would seek to sever all connection between religion and the State, and strip by degrees the House of Commons of the dignity and the influence which the ancient lineage of many of its members, their ample territorial domains, the commercial wealth, the intellectual culture, and the official experience of others still ensure it. Later on, as their principles should have triumphed, and the work of the revolution progressed, these two destructive parties—the Sectarian and the Godless Radicals—would inflict a grievous persecution, first on the Episcopalians, as the most formidable by their wealth

and numbers, and then on the Catholics of the Empire. Then, between these two parties, an internecine conflict would ensue. We should thus witness a hideous combination of the convulsions of 1642 and of 1792—the union of sectarian fanaticism and atheistic frenzy.

May the Almighty in His infinite mercy avert such awful calamities from our beloved country !

But that dreadful revolution, which a pious and learned dignitary of the Established Church has recently declared to be impending over the Empire, can be averted only by a gradual return to Catholicism on the one hand, and on the other, by a firm resistance to the revolutionary democracy.

If England is encompassed by awful moral dangers, there is scarcely another country which offers such consolations to the Church. In no Protestant land are the conversions to our religion so numerous, or attended with such generous sacrifices. And if the spiritual destitution of vast multitudes is so appalling, yet again, how thankfully are those received who to the parched soul bring the waters of eternal life ! So, if there be great fears, there are also great hopes for England.

Every enlightened Protestant patriot should see the necessity of satisfying the just, but too long resisted claims of Catholic Ireland in regard to the well-being of her peasantry, the religious education of all classes of her people, and the application of a large portion of the Church revenues, possessed by a small minority, to the purposes of charitable and educational institutes. The Catholics of the empire should on their part unite in associations with their better Protestant brethren in resisting the defecration of the school—the defecration of the State—in ameliorating the condition of the poor in all parts of the empire—in withdrawing the temptations to vice and drunkenness—in prosecuting the

infidel press, which strikes at the very roots of society*—in electing to Parliament none but men pledged to uphold the rights of the various religious denominations—pledged to discountenance a revolutionary policy abroad, and at home strenuously to resist all attempts to undermine the prerogatives of the Crown, the rights of the Peerage, the freedom of the family, and the liberties of all classes.

Paradoxical as to some the assertion may appear, yet I make bold to affirm, that Catholic Ireland has a greater interest than any other portion of the empire in the maintenance of the British Constitution. For she professes a religion which the infidel Revolution knows to be the most formidable obstacle to its guilty designs, and which, in the event of its triumph, it would, doubtless, make the object of its fiercest assaults. These times are perilous, and good citizens of all religious denominations should unite in defence of their country's institutions.

* In the present temper of the public mind, it would not be prudent—nay, it would not be possible—to make rationalistic works the object of legal prosecution; but those writings which attack the fundamental doctrines of natural religion, such as the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, a state of future rewards and punishments, the moral duties, and the rest, all good Protestants should combine with Catholics to bring before the tribunals of justice. Such works, addressed even to the humblest and most defenceless classes of society, have, within the last thirty years, enjoyed a scandalous impunity; and they are now more widely circulated than ever. Vain will be all attempts of the Legislature, and of the public, to repress vice and drunkenness among the people, if Atheism, and the obscenity which always accompanies it, be allowed in open day to dispense their deadly drugs.

NOTE TO THIRD LECTURE, *p.* 162.*Vindication of Burke's views of France from a recent attack of Earl Russell.*

IN Earl Russell's "Life of Fox" (vol iii., p. 126), we meet with the following singular passage:—"The old Monarchy of France, which Burke worshipped as an idol, was a compound of all that was corrupt in politics, infidel in religion, and profligate in morals."

Now before I examine the truth of this allegation, either as regards the old French Monarchy, or Burke himself, I must call attention to the strangeness and the vagueness of the phraseology in which the charge is couched. What does his Lordship understand by the words, "French Monarchy?" The word "Monarchy" is generally applied to the *constitution* of a country governed by kings; and not to *the persons* of which it is composed. And what would his Lordship say to a Frenchman who should retort in the same style, "that the British Constitution was noted for its loose habits and sceptical tendencies?" I presume, however, that his Lordship meant by the words "old Monarchy of France," the old Court of that country, including with each reigning king and royal family, the nobles who frequented it. Now the French Monarchy lasted for fourteen hundred years. Does Earl Russell mean his very sweeping charge to apply indiscriminately to every reign of that Monarchy—to the reign of S. Louis, as well as to that of Louis XV.? The supposition is scarcely possible.

I will suppose then, for his Lordship's sake, he means to

confine his accusations to the most corrupt period of the French Court—the one extending from the Regency of the Duke of Orleans, dating from 1715, down to the overthrow of the Monarchy in 1789.

I. Now as to the charge of infidelity, there was, prior to the Regency, no public profession of unbelief in France ; nor did it even assume, till near thirty years afterwards, a dogmatic shape. The Historical Dictionary of the sceptic Bayle had, indeed, already appeared in 1697 ; but the work was printed in Holland, and was the production of one who had been brought up in Calvinism. The impiety at the Court of the Regent was rather the cynical mockery of the libertine, than the captious reasoning of the sophist. Passing over obscurer names, it was with Voltaire systematic irreligion may be said to have sprung up in France ; but where did he and his compeers, Rousseau, D'Alembert, Diderot, Raynal, and others, find the weapons for their anti-Christian warfare, except in the works of the English Deists ? A long succession of enemies of the Christian Revelation—a Herbert of Cherbury—a Hobbes—a Chubb—a Collins—a Shaftesbury—a Tindal—a Toland—a Bolingbroke, and others, had flourished in our country from the reign of James I. down to that of George II. The philosopher of Ferney was even the friend and disciple of our eloquent St. John.

So the evil, which sprang out of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, first attacked Protestant England, and then contaminated Catholic France. From causes which it would be too long here to detail, irreligion, supported as it was in France by far greater talents than in England, wrought more mischief, moral and political. But several learned men, among the French laity as well as clergy, and in despite of the most adverse influences, fought to stem the torrent of unbelief.

II. As to the state of morality at the French Court during the period referred to, it was, indeed, low enough ; though in the course of the eighteenth century the degree of immorality differed at different epochs. During the long administration of Cardinal Fleury, from 1726 to 1743, and again during the whole reign of Louis XVI., the Court presented a very different moral aspect than during the fatal ascendancy of Mme. de Pompadour and Mme. du Barry. But will Earl Russell pretend that in the reigns of William III., and more especially of George I. and George II., the British Court had anything to boast of on the score of virtue? Can his Lordship point out, in the whole course of the eighteenth century, English princes and princesses that in piety and virtue can be ranked with the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI., and with that unfortunate monarch himself, or with Maria Leczinska, the consort of Louis XV., and his two daughters, especially Mme. Louise, with his grand-daughter Mme. Elizabeth, styled "the Angel of the Court," and his other grand-daughter, Mme. Clotilde, who became Queen of Sardinia, and lived and died a saint? Louis XV., though extremely dissolute, and under the influence of wicked courtiers and courtezans, ever retained a firm faith in the doctrines of religion, while in his own domestic circle he was surrounded by examples of the most touching virtue. He died penitent, and on his death-bed asked pardon of his subjects, for the scandal he had given them.

And now as to the Nobility, if we look to the *Noblesse de la robe*, or the Presidents and other judges in the Parliaments, though latterly many of them were led away by a spirit of opposition to the Church, yet were they in general men distinguished for purity of morals and gravity of character. The same could not be predicated of the high Nobility, who habitually frequented the Court. Their character has been drawn with great truth and impartiality by

Burke, in a passage already cited in the text, and on which it is unnecessary here to enlarge. From his intercourse with so many individuals of their body, both in France and subsequently in England during their emigration, he had better means of forming an estimate of their character than any other foreigner of that time.*

The admirable conduct of the Vendean and Breton nobility, in all the relations of public and private life, shows what the entire body would have proved, had they not been, by the fatal policy of Cardinal Richelieu and of Louis XIV., transplanted from their country residences to the vicious atmosphere of the Court and capital.

III. I now come to the charge of corrupt politics brought against the old French Court. Still confining myself to the period under review, I beg to refer Earl Russell to the masterly picture of the politics, foreign and internal, of the Court of Versailles, as drawn by Burke himself, in the "Letters on a Regicide Peace," and which in the text have

* Cardinal Pacca, in his "Nunciature at Cologne," complains that, in 1791, many of the emigrant French nobles, especially those belonging to the highest families, whom he met with at Brussels and at Coblenz, were noted for their dissolute morals and their contempt of religion; but when he visited Paris, about the year 1813, he writes as follows:—"With grateful surprise, and still greater satisfaction, it also came to my knowledge, that several gentlemen of the most illustrious families in Paris and in France, who, before the Revolution, were notorious for the open protection afforded by them to the infidel philosophers, and for their approbation of their irreligious manner of thinking, staggered by the terrible lesson reflected on themselves by political changes, had returned to the duties of religion in good earnest, and, leading the life of Christian men, were then endeavouring to promote the interests of religion, and of the Church, by all means in their power."—Pacca's Memoirs, vol. II., p. 24. London, 1850, Eng. Trans.

I wrote last year in a periodical, and I now repeat the assertion—the sons and the grandsons of the libertines who haunted the Courts of Louis XV. and Louis XVI. have long been among the most virtuous gentlemen of Europe. I suspect that in the French edition from which the translation has been made, the words *plusieurs gentilshommes* were used by Cardinal Pacca. *Plusieurs gentilshommes* ought to be translated *many*, not *several*, gentlemen.

been already so fully analyzed. His lordship will there see that the corrupt policy which he so justly condemns, was carried on by infidels and republicans; men whose principles were consistently applied and developed by the revolutionary assemblies—the Constituent of 1789, and the Legislative of 1791. “The philosophy of the eighteenth century,” says a great German writer, “bore the great Revolution in its womb:”* and it is the height of inconsistency on the part of Earl Russell, and of his patron, Fox, on the one hand, to decry the politics of the old Court of Versailles; and on the other, to extol the principles and the proceedings of those revolutionary assemblies that carried out the same policy, though with greater boldness and consistency. For to name only the more salient points of policy pursued by the revolutionists of 1789: the proscription of nobility; the iron centralization which they gradually established; the spoliation and violent persecution of the Church; the wars of unjust aggression on foreign states:—these measures had surely their source in the system begun under the old *régime*. The displacement of nobility, its deprivation of political power, and, in many provinces, of administrative influence—a system begun by Cardinal Richelieu, and continued by Louis XIV., and his successors—prepared the way for the suppression of its titles and orders, the confiscation of its property, and its extinction in its own blood. The encroachments thus begun on the rights of the local legislatures, and of the various municipal Corporations, and on the franchises of cities and townships, enabled the Revolution, and afterwards the first Napoleon, to enchain the provinces, like mute slaves, to the capital. The oppression often exercised, especially in the eighteenth century, by the Paris Parliament over the clergy, the burning of episcopal pastorals and Papal bulls, and still more revolting excesses;

* Frederick Schlegel.

the abolition of the Society of Jesus, and the confiscation of its property, were fine precedents for the sacrilegious spoliation and violent persecution of the Church by the men of 1789, and their successors. Then the perpetual wars, and the aggressive policy of Louis XIV., fostered in the breasts of the courtiers of his successors a spirit of reckless, unprincipled ambition, well described by Burke, and which was the natural prelude to the impious wars of the Revolution. And as regards the irreligious philosophy which the Revolution unbound and let loose in all its fury upon France, by whom had it been nurtured and pampered, except by the corrupt Ministers, and courtiers, and courtezans of Versailles, as well as by many among the moneyed classes of the capital?

Thus the Revolution of 1789 was but the evolution of the corrupt elements in the old *régime*. It is inconsistent to admire the child, and at the same time to hate the parent, whose lineaments are reflected in the offspring.

The difference in the two periods is this :—Under the regal absolutism of the last century, the work of moral and social destruction was carried on more slowly, and with less boldness, because it encountered the most formidable obstacles in institutions, and in the opinions, habits, and customs which those institutions had formed, as well as in the great public bodies still subsisting. But in the popular assemblies after 1789, that work of demolition was bolder, more rapid, and easier of accomplishment, because institutions and customs had been overthrown; opinion, to a wide extent, been misled; and no obstacles but the opposition of persons, more or less numerous, remained to arrest the progress of destruction.

IV. Now, as to the charge against Burke: "That he worshipped the old French Monarchy as an idol." Earl Russell, if he be serious, could have read to little purpose the "Reflections on the Revolution." Burke expressly states that the French Constitution, which had been originally formed

on the same type with the English, had in course of time degenerated: that it was a noble building which had suffered waste and dilapidation, but which was easily capable of repair.* He speaks with praise of the reforming spirit which pervaded the whole reign of Louis XVI., though, doubtless, some of those reforms were rash and unsound, and which Burke would have been the last man to approve. In 1792 he declares, in his "Correspondence," in a passage already quoted in the text, and which Earl Russell must have read, that he would not support a restoration of the Bourbons, unless coupled with a restoration of the three orders, wherein laws were to be enacted, and subsidies voted by the Estates, in conjunction with the King; and various abuses in Church and State to be corrected by the several competent authorities.

He points out the good qualities of the high Noblesse, but complains of the vices of many among them, as well as of their patronage of the false philosophy which had brought about their ruin.

Is this the language of blind idolatry? Burke's eulogy of the French Clergy, the boyish reminiscences of Earl Russell himself ought to have confirmed. For his lordship cannot have forgotten those venerable men who, when driven by an anti-Christian persecution from their native land, met with so generous a hospitality from the Protestant Government, aristocracy, and clergy of England. There was scarcely a noble house in which those exemplary ecclesiastics were not received, either as occasional guests, or as tutors to the family.

* Earl Russell admits that Burke was "a profound and discriminating admirer of the British Constitution"; but as in this passage Burke well showed the original identity of the French with the British Constitution, it is impossible that he should misjudge the one, while he rightly appreciated the other. Yet this is the *gravamen* of his lordship's charge against Burke.

But—will the reader credit my statement?—so far from concurring in the universal praise, which Protestant as well as Catholic countries have bestowed on the emigrant Clergy of France, and which Burke, from twenty-five years' experience and personal knowledge confirmed, Earl Russell pronounces the following judgment on this body :

"The flagrant immorality of the French nobility, *the notorious infidelity of the French Clergy*, the levity and culpable frivolity of the Queen of France, found in him (Burke) not a lenient and equitable judge, but a passionate advocate."*

Of the nobility I have already spoken ; and on the Queen of France, Marie Antoinette, I shall presently say a few words. My business is now with the Clergy.

There are accusations, happily, so absurd and incongruous that they defeat their own purpose. To speak only of the secular Clergy of France, we have seen in the text, that out of 135 prelates, four only were untrue to the Church, to the Holy See, and to themselves. We have seen, too, that out of sixty thousand curés and vicaires, no less than *fifty thousand* evinced the same fidelity to their engagements, and the same loyalty to the Church, as their superiors in the hierarchy. The schismatical institution, called the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy," was, as has been intimated in the text, devised as a snare for the Clergy ; and its rejection by them was made the pretext for a general proscription of the Catholic religion, and even of all forms of Christianity. And then a persecution arose, which, though on a more circumscribed area of territory, was as cruel and bloody as those which in the reign of the Roman Emperors, Decius and Diocletian, had desolated the early Church.

Yet the overwhelming majority of the French Clergy, who, rather than take a schismatical oath, endured for twelve

* "Life of Fox," vol. iii., p. 123.

long years every species of privation, outrage, and contumely, poverty, imprisonment, exile, banishment to the pestilential shores of Guiana, and often death in its most frightful forms, either on the scaffold, or in popular tumults, were, according to Earl Russell, nothing more than infidels, and *notorious* infidels !!! *So infidels persecuted infidels*; and a vast number of men were found insane enough to sacrifice every earthly blessing—ease, competence, freedom, country, relatives, life itself, in defence of a religion in which they did not believe !!! Can a more portentous absurdity be even conceived? An Englishman feels humiliated in being compelled to rebut such charges, coming from a nobleman distinguished for character and talents, and who has held such high offices in his country. And what I have said of the secular Clergy of France will apply to the regular. The inmates of the female cloisters were in an especial degree exemplary. Abuses in that quarter were extremely rare.*

I do not say that every emigrant Bishop, Priest, and Monk was a saint; nor do I mean to affirm that, *in every individual case*, the emigrant Clergy had been as exemplary in the time of prosperity as in that of adversity. Thus, Cardinal de Rohan, Bishop of Strasburg, who, before the Revolution, had given great scandal, became after 1789 a new man, and with a reduced income gave far more abundant alms, than when he had been in possession of ample revenues.

In support of these observations I will cite a few authorities, such as the limits of the note will permit.

Cardinal Pacca, who was Papal Nuncio at Cologne, from the year 1791 to 1793, bears the following testimony to the virtues of emigrant French priests who came under his observation:—"La plupart," says he, "appartenant à la vénérable classe des curés, tinrent une conduite vraiment

* "Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire Ecclésiastique du dix-huitième siècle," par M. Picot, t. iii., p. 147.

édifiante, et justifiaient pleinement la bonne réputation, qui les avoit précédés en Belgique et en Allemagne. Quant aux Evêques Français, on fait que la grande majorité montre le plus grand courage, le plus grand zèle pour défendre l'Eglise, et fut un sujet d'édification pour toute l'Europe ; mais je dois confesser avec amertume, que la conduite d'un petit nombre d'entre eux fut loin de répondre à l'haute opinion qu'on s'en étoit faite.—“Nonciature de Cologne,” quoted in Rohrbacher’s “History of the Church,” vol. xxvii., p. 449.

The small number of Bishops here mentioned, as not corresponding to the high reputation that had been formed of them, were, as the Cardinal afterwards explains, but two or three. And these two or three prelates were guilty of nothing more than of a light and worldly tone in their conversation.

The Abbé Rohrbacher, the late learned and able Church Historian, thus speaks of the emigrant priesthood of his country :—“L’émigration des ecclésiastiques, à peu d’exceptions près, fut-elle édifiante pour les peuples, et y déposa des germes de résurrection pour le Catholicisme notamment en Angleterre,” vol. xxvii., p. 501., “Hist. Eccl.” * M. Picot, in his ecclesiastical memoirs of the last century, thus writes of the same Clergy :—“Le Clergé Français se montra digne d’un si noble accueil (in England), et sa con-

* The author of an excellent manual of English History, recently published, confirms this statement, in which all English Catholics will concur.—“The number of French Priests,” says the writer, “at one time in England, was no less than eight thousand, one thousand of whom were lodged at the expense of the Government, in the King’s House at Winchester, while the University of Oxford caused the Vulgate version of the Holy Scriptures to be printed for their use. A great impulse was naturally given to religion by the presence of *so many holy and learned ecclesiastics*, and a spirit of toleration began to be awakened for the co-religionists of men in whom the national sympathies were so warmly excited.”—“Hist. of England,” p. 716. Burns and Oates, London, 1864.

Mr. Charles Butler, who was intimately acquainted with so many Bishops and Priests among the emigrant Clergy, bears frequent testimony in his writings to their most exemplary conduct.

duite répondit à la pureté de la cause pour laquelle il souffrit : elle dissipa bien préjugés et rendit respectable aux yeux des Anglois l'ancienne foi de leurs pères. Leur zèle, leur constance, leur charité, frappoient les esprits les plus prévenus.—“Memoires pour servir à l'Histoire Ecclésiastique, du dixhuitième siècle,” t. iii., p. 240.

On this subject the reader may consult the following works :—L'Histoire du Clergé Français pendant la Revolution,” par l'Abbé Barruel ; “Les Confesseurs de la Foi de l'Eglise Gallicane,” par l'Abbé Carron. Besides the two works just cited, “Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire Ecclésiastique du dixhuitième siècle,” par M. Picot, 4 vols. ; and “L'Histoire de l'Eglise,” par Rohrbacher.

It is extremely worthy of note that the very numerous body of Clergy, whose piety, fortitude, and heroic self-devotion have been here commemorated, emerged from the most corrupt period of French society, and that the elderly prelates and dignitaries had been all nominated by Louis XV. himself ! Happily, those nominations were, according to the constitution of the Catholic Church, under the control of the Holy See.

All admit that the Church of France during the eighteenth century was no longer, either in a moral or an intellectual point of view, what it had been in the times of S. Vincent of Paul, and of Bossuet and Fénelon. And the reasons of this decline have been stated in the text. Had Earl Russell been content to say, with other people, that during the last century there were not a few ecclesiastics in France, who by their vices, and in some cases, by their unbelief, dishonoured their sacred calling, he would not have found any one inclined to dispute the accuracy of the assertion. And least of all would Burke, had he been alive, have been disposed to contradict the statement. This is proved by several passages in the “Reflections on the Revolution,” and in the

“Correspondence,” which I have already cited in the text, and which it is unnecessary here to repeat. So utterly unfounded is the charge of a passionate advocacy of this venerable order of men brought forward against him.

I have racked my brain to think what could have led Earl Russell to hazard so monstrous an accusation as the one described, against the French Priesthood, that by its exemplary conduct and its heroic endurance, under the most dreadful trials, has won the esteem and admiration of Europe. And I think I may, perhaps, account for the origin of this strange delusion.

First, his Lordship had, doubtless, met with obscene tales and infidel works, with the title of Abbé prefixed to the names of the authors. And he doubtless conceived all persons bearing such a title to be priests; whereas in many cases laymen, in order to obtain admission into good society, received the tonsure—a preliminary to the minor orders—without any intention of being promoted to the priesthood, or incurring any of its obligations.

Secondly, such characters as Loménie de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, in the time of Louis XVI., and Tallyrand, Bishop of Autun, were doubtless not calculated to give his lordship a favourable opinion of the French Clergy. These two joined the schism.

Lastly, the scandalous characters, who in the mock schismatical Church, called “Constitutional,” were invested with dignities, and many of whom openly apostatized from Christianity, were not fitted to remove from his lordship’s mind these unfavorable impressions. But these, as I have shown, were the scandalous exceptions. The traitor Judas, says the illustrious Görres, will always have his representatives in every age of the Church. It was a comparatively small minority of the priesthood that were unsound in doctrine, like the Janseuists, or were dissolute in morals, and

much fewer still, who gave in to the false philosophy of the day. The Revolution, as I said in the text, served to winnow the chaff from the wheat.

When Earl Russell, in his famous Durham letter, spoke of the Catholic religion, which had renovated and civilized the world ; which had created five great literary epochs—the Patristic—the Mediæval—the age of Leo X. ; that of Louis XIV., and that of France and Germany in the present age ; which has been adorned by the profoundest and most comprehensive intellects from Origen and S. Augustine down to Bossuet and Pascal ; and which, by clearly chalking out the field of faith and the field of opinion, gives at once the greatest security and the greatest freedom to the human mind, and consequently affords the greatest scope to philosophic speculation :—when Earl Russell, I say, spoke of this religion, as fettering the mind and enslaving the soul, he showed the sad effects of early prejudice on a mind naturally liberal and ingenuous.

But when, in the face of the world that had witnessed their sufferings and their virtues, his Lordship calls the French Clergy of the last century, though resplendent with the halo of confessorship and martyrdom, “notorious infidels,” he shocks the moral sense of mankind, and casts a stigma on piety itself.

Then another great crime of Burke, in the eyes of Earl Russell, was his panegyric on Queen Marie Antoinette. And was ever princess by her piety, her virtues, her goodness of heart, her fascinating manners, her grace, her beauty, and lastly, by those dire misfortunes which ever set the crowning glory on virtue, more calculated to win the enthusiastic homage of generous men ? Her royal consort and herself, by their conjugal fidelity, and by the purity of their lives, edified the Court and the nation. And subjected as both were to the severe scrutiny of jealousy and hatred,

they passed unscathed through the fiery ordeal. To this high-minded Queen, misfortune imparted a new energy ; and her answers in happier days, always prompt and sprightly, were often, in the years of adversity, truly sublime. A life so noble, yet so severely tried, she terminated by an heroic death, full of resignation to Heaven and of forgiveness to her foes, the victim of impiety and of fiendish hate.

The Prince de Ligne, who had lived at the Court of Versailles, and had been admitted into the most intimate society of this Queen, ever expresses in his writings great admiration for her intellect and her beauty, as well as sincere respect for her virtues. See “*Biographie Universelle*,” t. xxvii., p. 75. The like testimony to her moral and intellectual qualities is borne by Mme. de Campan, who had been attached to her household. The poet Delille characterizes Marie Antoinette in the following lines :—

*“ Qui donnoit tant d’éclat au trône des Bourbons,
Tant de charme au Pouvoir, tant de grace à ses dons.”*

But was this excellent Princess absolutely faultless ? No one pretends to say so. “All candid people,” says the late excellent M. Michaud, the historian of the Crusades ; “all candid people confess that Marie Antoinette committed some faults ; but those faults they never taxed with more than levity and imprudence.” See his biographical sketch of the Queen in the “*Biog. Univ.*” p. 74., And what were these acts of levity and imprudence ? Nothing more than that the Queen used to take lessons in elocution from actors—a practice which I have known the most virtuous French ecclesiastics to follow. The other act of imprudence he mentions is, that the Queen used to disguise herself, and go among the people. These were acts quite innocent in themselves, but, in that corrupt age especially, were liable to the charge of imprudence. But there is nothing here to

justify the harsh expression, "culpable frivolity," used by Earl Russell—an expression which is somewhat equivocal, and seems to cast a slur on a spotless name.*

Life in Paris was then so factitious, that the great loved often to run into the opposite extreme of a rustic simplicity. Louis XVI. and his consort loved to escape at times from the stiff etiquette and luxurious pomp of Versailles, and in the "petite Trianon," to play the part of the miller and his wife.

The Foxite Party, conscious of its guilty sympathies with the French Revolution, cannot pardon the virtues of its victims. "*Proprium est humani generis odisse quem læferis.*"

It is sad that Earl Russell should still deem it necessary to perpetuate the wretched traditions of Holland House, and to strive to undermine the authority of one whom he admits "to have been a good as well as a great man, and a discriminating and profound admirer of his country's constitution," and more especially at a moment when that constitution is assailed in its different parts, and especially in the order which his lordship adorns by his integrity and his talents.

* In the case of this Princess, as in other cases, Burke was not the blind admirer he is represented to be by Earl Russell. He says that Queen Marie Antoinette evinced a certain proneness to political intrigue, which was often damaging to the royal cause. He laments the influence which during her captivity the Austrian ambassador exercised over her; yet it is certain that she gave, at times, wise and energetic counsels to Louis XVI.

NOTE TO FOURTH LECTURE, *p.* 167.*Letter from Pope Pius VI. to Edmund Burke.**Nobili viro* EDMUNDO BURKE PIUS PAPA VI.

ROMÆ, 7 Septembris, 1793.

NOBILIS vir, salutem. Nostram profecto commendationem, nostrique grati animi testimonium jure quodam suo vindicare sibi videntur ii, qui apostasiæ et impietatis tempore suas ingenii vires eo intenderunt, ut bonam causam defendendam susciperent, utque plurimum adlaborarent in juvandis fovendisque non iis modo egregiis ecclesiasticis viris, qui sunt è regno Galliarum extorres, sed omnibus etiam Catholicis, qui in florentissimis istis Magnæ Britannæ regnis commorantur. Hos inter tu in primis enituisi, qui celebre elucubraisti opus ad evertenda, et profliganda novorum Galliæ philosophorum commenta, quique tuos hortatus esses cives, nedum ut opem ferrent, ea quâ præstant humanitate memoratis Galliarum ecclesiasticis viris, sed etiam ut plurimum faverent Catholicis in Magnæ Britannæ Regno natis, qui fidelitatis laude pollentes se dignos reddiderunt, in quos natio universa suum amorem et benevolentiam conjiceret, et in quibus publici regiminis tranquillitas et securitas conquiesceret. Quod quidem per te et sæpe alias factum est, et in anno præsertim 1780, et aliis quoque temporibus, quæ postea sunt consecuta. Hinc læto hilarique velimus accipias animo nostras commendationes et laudes, quæ eò maximè spectant, ut tu magis magisque exciteris ad tuendam causam humanitatis, tibi quæ præterea persuasum habeas, nostræ in Magnæ Britannæ regem illustrem, et in inclytam nationem existimationi ob tam eximia liberalitatis argumenta magnam factam accessionem fuisse,

veluti melius coram declarabit is, qui tibi has nostras literas reddet, quique Nobis, et apostolicæ fedi addictus est, et communem tecum nationem habere quodammodo gloriatur. Interim tibi a Deo optimo maximo bona omnia ex animo adprecamur. *Datum Romæ, die 7 Septembris, 1793, pontificatus nostri anno decimo nono.*—*Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, Vol. ii., p. 242. *Dublin, 1866.*

NOTE TO FOURTH LECTURE, *p.* 175.

TO show the perfect conformity of Burke's views with those of the Whigs in 1688, it will be well to place in juxtaposition a speech of one of the leading prosecutors of the Tory Churchman, Dr. Sacheverell, for his sermons directed against the Revolution of that year, with a speech of Burke's delivered in Parliament in 1791. "They (those who brought about the Revolution of 1688) saw," says Sir Joseph Jekyl, "*that there was no remedy left but the last; and when that remedy took place, the whole frame of the Government was restored entire and unhurt.*" This showed the excellent temper the nation was in at that time, that after such provocations from an abuse of the regal power, and such a convulsion, *no one part of the Constitution was altered, or suffered the least damage; but on the contrary, the whole received new life and vigour.*" (See "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," pp. 57.)

Let us now turn to Burke's speech. Speaking of the Revolution of 1688, he says:—"What we did was, in truth and substance, and in a constitutional light, a revolution not made, but prevented. We took solid securities; we settled doubtful questions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable, fundamental parts of our constitution, we

made no revolution ; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the Monarchy. Perhaps it might be shown that we strengthened it very considerably. The nation kept the same ranks, the same orders, the same privileges, the same franchises, the same rates for property, the same subordinations, the same order in the law, in the revenue, and in the magistracy ; the same Lords, the same Commons, the same corporations, the same electors.”—Speech in the House of Commons, 9th Feb., 1791. Bohn’s ed. vol. iii., pp. 279.

Such defensive changes are well called by the German philosopher, Francis Baader, *evolutions*, as opposed to destructive changes termed by him *revolutions*. The former are sometimes necessary to prevent the latter.

NOTE TO FOURTH LECTURE, *p.* 213.

THE following is a summary of the heroic achievements of the Vendéans, taken from an excellent abridgment of French history by M. Lefranc :

“ Telles font, dit M. de Chateaubriand, ces guerres a jamais célèbres, où dans l’espace de huit ans (1792-1800), on compte 200 prises et reprises de villes, 700 combats particuliers, et 17 grandes batailles rangées. La Vendée tint à diverses époques, 70 et 75,000 hommes sous les armes ; elle combattit et dispersa à peu près 300,000 hommes de troupes réglées, et 6 à 700,000 requisitionnaires et gardes nationaux. Et c’étoit une petite armée obscure, sans armes, sans richesses, qui eut pour premiers chefs des hommes jusqu’ alors ignorés, quelques pauvres gentilshommes, un voiturier, un garde-chasse. La Convention appeloit les Vendéens un *peuple de brigands* ; Napoleon les nomma un

peuple de géants, et l'histoire a ratifié la parole du grand homme."—"Histoire de France," par Lefranc, t. ii., p. 589.

Yet this was the heroic people Mr. Pitt allowed to be overpowered by the superior forces of the Revolution! How fatal was that temporising policy, which carried succour to these heroes only when they were at the point of extermination!

NOTE TO FIFTH LECTURE, *p.* 323.

THE following sketch of the advantages accruing to India from more recent British rule, is from the pen of an English writer, quoted by an American missionary:

"The protection of private property is now generally effected by a British administration, though cases of personal hardship occur; bodily suffering and barbarian punishments are restrained; means for an equitable administration of justice have been provided; superior courts of appeal have been established: native chiefs and tributary princes have been compelled to submit to law, and observe something like equity in their proceedings; a vigilant police for the suppression of crime, and trial by jury have been either established or restored; the most perfect toleration of religious differences exists, and protection is afforded to each person in observance of the rites of his chosen religion; peace reigns in districts formerly distracted and torn by the contentions of despots; industry is protected from robbery and private wrong, while the enterprising and successful may amass capital without alarm, and enjoy it in security." "India and the Hindus," by F. D. W. Ward, late missionary at Madras, and member of the American Oriental Society. See "Pictorial India," p. 462.



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